

EASTERN EUROPEAN IMMIGRANT YOUTH IDENTITY FORMATION  
AND ADAPTATION IN AN URBAN UNIVERSITY CONTEXT

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by  
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May, 2011

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**ABSTRACT**

Eastern European Immigrant Youth Identity Formation and  
Adaptation in an Urban University Context

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Doctoral Advisory Committee Chair: Dr. Sherri Grasmuck

This study examines the childhood emigration, cultural and linguistic transitions and adaptation pathways of Eastern European immigrant students on an urban university campus. Although Eastern Europeans and immigrant children represent a substantial segment of the immigrant population in the U.S. they are understudied groups. After the collapse of the Soviet Union large numbers of migrants emigrated from the former Soviet Republics, but less is known about their experiences compared to other immigrant groups. Immigrant children have historically come to the U.S. since its inception but compared to the adult experience their status has been rendered ambiguous and their experiences marginalized to such an extent that they have largely been invisible in the literature. Commonly children are referred to as “immigrants” rather than assigned their own category. While researchers generally acknowledged that primary socialization of children influence their secondary socialization, the influences of child migrants including acculturation and integration experiences with associated emotions have not been sufficiently considered. There is a general assumption in much of the immigrant scholarship that the cultural influences of the first country on child migrants are essentially negated by the

acculturation process in the U.S., and this conjecture leads scholars to construct various generational categories that collapse immigrant children with the second generation native-born youth in their analysis thereby potentially skewing or obscuring critical outcome information.

Since immigrant children's voices have largely been absent from the literature, in-depth interviews with Eastern European immigrant college students, we examined the extent to which the child migrants experienced the migration dislocation and incorporation as well as the possible lasting consequences in their adaptation pathways, self-identifications, social interaction, and standpoints on societal issues associated with emotional acculturation.

Collectively, the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant experience indicated that they were meeting with success academically, were focused on individual goals, expressed appreciation for diversity, and were integrated into the social and professional organization on the university campus. However, most of the participants who emigrated during childhood reported that they had difficult or traumatic migration transitions in their first U.S. schools and neighborhoods, and often they recounted emotionally the memories of these profound events associated with their acculturation during the interviews. As a group, the Eastern European students expressed that both positive and negative immigration and transitional experiences, perspectives gained from the shared struggle with their parents, openness to diversity, achievement orientation, and work ethic are some of the differentiating characteristics that set them apart from their native-born American siblings, and the second-generation Russian and Ukrainian children of immigrants. Most of the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students on campus socialized with other immigrants of diverse backgrounds, mainstream American students, least often with co-ethnics and rarely with second-generation co-

ethnics or native minorities. When we conceptualize the social interaction boundary to include all immigrants, then the participants in this study may be considered “immigrant” in following in a modified form some of the findings of Grasmuck and Kim (2010) that investigated the social mixing patterns of four ethno-racial groups on the same campus. Although most of the participants had reported overall positive high school experiences, those who contended with social development issues, understanding the American culture, and the English language on the campus disproportionately represented those who had reported overall traumatic childhood integrations. As a group they embraced the ideology of meritocracy, and those who had reported traumatic childhood acculturation experiences more often adhered to the standpoint that white people were not more privileged and that equal opportunity exists for all. When we considered identity formation we found substantial complexity in the Eastern European immigrant self-identifications with a tendency to resist labels. Salient non ethnic (cosmopolitan/global/role) identity claims, hybrid or multi layered ethnic self-identifications that included salient non ethnic components emerged from their narratives. None of the participants identified solely as “American” but included element in their self-identification. The totality of the dominant patterns that emerged from the Eastern European immigrant students narrative concerning outcomes for immigrant children, methodologies are warranted that take into account age at arrival, developmental stages, engendered emotions during childhood acculturation, and the standpoint of the foreign-born children. Concomitantly, the model of segmented assimilation does not theorize the potential impact of emotions on school age children who negotiate divergent peer contexts of reception without their parents. This investigation indicates that

c h i l d r e n s r e a c t i o n t o t h e n a t u r e o f t h e i r a c  
considering social psychological adjustment, adaptation, and mobility, and that the emotional  
legacy of childhood migration experiences ought to be considered at least equal to structural  
features such as governmental policies toward them, the composition of their enclaves, and labor  
market conditions.

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Without the participation of the Eastern European immigrant students this study would not have been possible. Through their voices we have increased the visibility of the immigrant children, our understanding about their childhoods in Eastern Europe during the post-Communist era, their emigration, the nature of their integration into the U.S. schools and neighborhoods, and adaptation on the urban university campus. I appreciate that the students shared their often difficult and profound childhood integration experiences in the hope that other immigrant children would benefit.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on the experiences of immigrant youth from Eastern Europe who arrived in the United States during childhood, and in young adulthood entered an urban university campus. Compared to the adult experience of immigration, less is known about the identity formations and adaptation pathways of immigrant children even though children have emigrated from the inception and still continue to arrive in the United States in great numbers. They are typically referred to as *children of immigrants* as if only the parents are foreign born, and their unique characteristics are subsumed under various constructed research categories that frequently are conflated with native-born American children referred to as the *second generation*. These practices essentially seem to be anchored in a premise that because children compared to adults have experienced their first culture for briefer periods of time, their experiences are not as consequential for outcomes. Concomitantly, there is a commonly held viewpoint that immigrant children acculturate at a faster pace than adult immigrants. Yet, there is evidence that the *emotional universe of childhood* may evoke long-lasting effects into adulthood as is demonstrated by the linguistic descriptions and attachments by adults who were child migrants (Besemeres, 2004:154). Disruption of critical child developmental stages through uprooting associated with emigration has implications for child outcomes. Additionally, challenges for immigrant children during cultural and linguistic transitions may be compounded since certain expressions reflecting feelings, ideas, and needs cannot be adequately translated into English.

In my earlier investigation with immigrant children and adolescents, I found that their experiences reflected patterns associated with their migration and transition that were distinctive from native-born American children, and there were implications for lasting effects of self-identification modes and adaptation trajectories of immigrant children who emigrated to the U.S. during childhood. As a result of these findings, I argued for a methodology that would disaggregate the foreign-born from the native-born populations, and that would take into consideration the unique characteristics of the childhood emigration and transitional experience in any empirical inquiry (Seeger-diNovi, 1996). My interest in childhood migration in part stems from the experiences my brothers and I had as young children when we emigrated with our parents to the U.S. from Germany. In important ways the literature that has been prevalent on the “second generation” or on “children of immigrants” had experienced as individuals and as a family. At the time when I explored the experiences of immigrant children, there were educators who also observed the lack of information on the immigrant child experience.

...There seems to be, after all, a generalization easily. The paucity of literature on the difficulties experienced by immigrant children and the lack of counseling services specifically designed to deal with the traumas of immigration suggest that the general public is either not aware or has little concern for the difficulties of the transition immigrant families experience... (Ada in Igooa, 1995: vii).

Essentially, the parents' culture and language most salient influence on the children despite the fact that immigrant children had been socialized in a foreign country and language. However, researchers in the field of Early Child Development point to the critical importance of *primary socialization* during childhood since the stage of *secondary socialization* is cumulative and builds on the primary socialization phase.

Handel, Cahill and Elkin draw on the theoretical perspectives of Berger and Luckmann (1966) and Handel (2003) to explain that the early childhood socialization is considered *primary*, and how that it typically may have a continuing influence in later life despite the *secondary* socialization that may occur.

These perspectives as well as others related to the experience of childhood emigration and transition will be discussed further within the literature review that follows. The discussion includes a summarization of the development of assimilation perspectives generally, current research on immigrant youth, arguments for methodologies that disaggregate the foreign-born from the native born populations, commentary on works related to the formation of self, self-concept, and implications for identity formation and adaptation for immigrant children.

### **Review of the Literature on Immigration**

As national and global economic and/or ideological forces stimulated voluntary and involuntary migration to the United States over the course of the twentieth century, the reception by the host society to different ethnic groups varied. One of the early theorists of immigrant incorporation was Robert E. Park who by focusing on the dynamics of the turn of the century European migration to America and observing their gradual incorporation into mainstream society argued that there were universal identifiable cycles of race relations that immigrants passed through; i.e., contacts, competition, accommodation and assimilation (1964:150). Contacts occurred between groups through exploration or migration, and are followed by competition for scarce resources that is likely to become violent and only dissipates when one group becomes dominant over another. When two groups learn to co-exist over time, they enter the stage of accommodation. As the smaller group adopts the language and customs of the larger

group, external signs of differences are erased with the exception of physical characteristics.

When this process has culminated, then *assimilation* of the less dominant group into the

dominant group has become a reality. This is in spite of the type of inevitability to the end result and has been referred to as *Anglo-conformity ideology*

(McLemore, 1983:46), and together with the *melting pot* perspective are representative of the

dominant view that all immigrants would become Americanized: that is, acquire the WASP

culture (Myers, 2003:129).

Observers have noted that within the great immigration stream of the 1880s to 1910s to the U.S. that the Southern and Eastern Europeans were less accepted by the dominant group and they questioned the possibility of their inclusion. However, functionalists theorized that upward mobility is enhanced when prejudice and discrimination toward *foreigners* decreases as they adapt to the patterns of the dominant culture (Macionis, 2005:383). This formulation included an

expansion of eventual assimilation when all racial external physical signs have been erased (McLemore, 1983:20-21). However, Park argued at the

beginning of the twentieth century that all human differences would be absorbed except for color of skin (1914:611-615). He reasoned that *racial groups*, such as the Negro and Japanese, would

be marked by the subordinate status conferred upon them by the white dominant group that in turn created a sense of mindfulness about their group membership. Accordingly, Park assessed that the color of skin for blacks became a symbol of their prior enslavement as well as the social and institutional segregation that followed emancipation. Furthermore, *self-consciousness*

developed among Black Americans, and the ensuing nationalist movement that inspired *Black*

*Pride* fostered consolidation of the black racial group that contributed to the formation of a bi-racial society thereby impeding the full incorporation of blacks into U.S. society.

Other proponents of the straight-line assimilation model, such as Gordon, of amalgamation through intermarriage, includes the notion that with disappearance of ethnic/racial characteristics extension of benefits by the dominant group will occur. Concomitantly, therein is the implication that the dominant group has the power to expand boundaries. This discretionary privilege had negative consequences for nonwhite groups historically in the U.S. Although honorary white status has been conferred to selected minority groups it has been contingent on factors such as class, appearance, and adherence to dominant values. And since race is ascribed, not-white/not-black groups may be phenotypically ambiguous to white people regardless of self-identification. In critical ways, the identification of others is a political process that consists of boundary formation to establish citizenship and hierarchies in society (Tilly, 2005).

### ***Critiques and Modifications of Assimilation Perspectives***

Since acculturation is the first step in Gordon's model, by some groups raised questions in the 1960s about the applicability of straight-line assimilation model to non-conforming groups (Myers, 2003) as it did not accommodate diversity, take into account persistent racism against blacks, overemphasized incorporation through successive generations, ignored or de-emphasized the influence of different levels of human capital that immigrants possess upon entry, and did not consider how immigrants impact the main culture (Alba and Nee, 2003). Additionally, the heightened interest in ethnicity within the black community spread to Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Asians, Native Americans, and eventually to

*white ethnics* (Steinberg, 2001). These patterns led to the emergence of *cultural pluralism* models, and arguments about the compatibility of pluralism with the tenets of democracy (Gordon, 1981). Other researchers identified a range of factors that encouraged retention of ethnic differences including the “...relations h macroscopic structure self, and Juliani, 1976:391).e In the wake ( Yance of persistent evidence of cultural retention by ethnic groups, the Anglo-conformity model was modified by some theorists to include the preservation of some ethnic traits by groups who were otherwise well incorporated into society (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970). Similarly, Greeley (1972) stressed that incorporation is not just a one-way street and developed the notion of *ethno genesis* to explain the process whereby the encounter between immigrants and the dominant culture produces a transformation in both the dominant society as well as the immigrant culture.

Alba observed that there was a general movement for ethnic whites toward a generalized European American identity. Similarly, Waters (1990) has argued that whites have a range of ethnic options for self-identification through complicated methods by shifting and choosing identities that may be selective, intermittent and symbolic. In contrast, non-white groups have fewer options as their race typically trumps ethnic expression (1990:115). Conservative assimilated whites with “optional” ethnicity significance of race in American life” (Winan compared to other racial groups in the U.S. have a lower degree of self-awareness about their racial identity, and consequently a white racial invisibility emerged. This phenomenon fostered an *identity vacuum* among whites that provided greater discretion for ethnic/racial identification

compared to other racial groups, and it facilitated the eventual expansion of boundaries to include all European Americans (Doane, 2003).

Many of the perspectives discussed herein modeled their arguments on evidence drawn from the incorporation over time of waves of immigration from the turn of the century. After the 1965 immigration legal reforms, the United States witnessed the large scale increase in immigration from non-traditional source countries, especially from Latin America and Asia. Most of the post-1965 new immigrants were immigrants of color who hailed from Third World societies and not from traditional European contexts. The arrival of large number of immigrants in the post-war context ushered in a new wave of scholars theorizing about immigrant incorporation. Newer assimilation models began to consider the range of variant experiences of immigrants from Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America and the Middle East and the consequences for their incorporation.

Among the most significant new theoretical developments associated with recent immigrant incorporation is the perspective of *segmented assimilation* which posits that there is not just one pathway toward incorporation but a range of divergent outcomes depending on a complex array of factors (Gans, 1992; Portes and Zhou, 1993; Rumbaut and Portes, 1994; Zhou, 1998). Portes and Rumbaut (2001) refined the concept of *segmented assimilation* in their large-scale comparative study of the mobility patterns of second generation immigrants from 17 national origin groups located in Florida and California in 1992 (2001:26-27). Divergent outcomes and possible *downward assimilation* are linked to the history of the first generation, acculturation process, barriers for second-generation youth, and family and community resources

(Portes and Rumbaut, 2001:45-46). Further discussion of their theoretical perspective will be included with the review on research specific to immigrant youth.

Alba and Nee (2003) have offered a somewhat more positive assessment of the long-term chances of new immigrant incorporation. They argue that the pluralist or segmented assimilation model contains the idea of incorporation in the form of entry into the mainstream (2003:9). Alba and Nee identify *proximate* causes which operate at the individual and social network... levels and are shaped by the forms of the *distal*, often deeper causes, which are embedded in large structures such as the institutional arrangements of the state, firm, and labor market...” (2003:38)

mechanisms that facilitate incremental assimilation as an intergenerational process based on agency, and unintended consequences of daily individual action. The central component of their theoretical perspective is a *boundary spanning and altering* mechanism that enhances the possibility of minority group assimilation into the mainstream. This standpoint is rooted in the observation that *formerly* defined non-white groups have been included in the mainstream despite post-civil rights era racism. In essence, adaptation to the dominant group values and standards becomes the vehicle for entrance into mainstream society and institutions that open the door to opportunities. Positing dominant group values as an *ideal* to be emulated has been contested, and other theoretical perspectives have been developed that posit the concept of refusal to assimilate as an alternative to segmented assimilation (Esser, 2007).

### *E j c n n g p i g u " v q " v u j d a r y E x p a n s i o n P e r s p e c t i v e o ö " D q*

Steinberg (2001) convincingly demonstrated in *The Ethnic Myth* that minority groups have distinct experiences related to factors of economic and social contexts that existed at the

time of their arrival. The variant experiences within groups and between groups can often be explained by different degrees of social capital and educational attainment. To illustrate, while the composition of the first immigrant waves of Vietnamese and Cubans included highly educated, wealthier, professional, and well-connected people, the second waves in comparison were poorer and less educated (Kibria, 1998; Myers, 2003:511). The Vietnamese and Cuban immigration experience demonstrates that upward economic and social mobility may be contingent on levels of embeddedness; that is, the extent to which immigrants have been able to utilize human capital in the development of networks within their communities (Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993:1320). However, ascription by others of ethno-racial groups may also influence social, political, and economic outcomes (Cornell and Hartmann, 2007).

These contributions to the study of immigrant incorporation reflect the extreme complexity of the phenomenon, and the following review of the literature regarding the immigrant youth experience in the U.S. indicates that there are added complexities that remain unaddressed in contemporary research.

### **Immigrant Youth**

Immigration streams to the U.S. continue to be diverse, and immigrant children are the fastest growing segment within the child population (Landale and Oropesa, 1995). Although accounts of the role immigrant youth have played in U.S. history have been documented (Klapper, 2007), they typically have been depicted as *children of immigrants* as if they did not experience the transition, and that the *culture of their parents* has been most salient in the

c h i l d r e n s i d e n t i t y f o r m a t i o n a s s o c i a t e d w i t h

Many researchers combine data about the foreign-born children who emigrate at early ages with data about the native born American children of immigrant parents that results in obscuring patterns related to transitional experiences of the immigrant youth (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco, 2001-9). The complexity of generational characteristics and immigration cohorts pose challenges to investigators of the immigrant youth experience. Min argues that the U.S.-born children of immigrants ought to be designated the second generation, and those who are foreign-born and who emigrated at age 12 or younger are the 1.5 generation even though some researchers have referred to both populations broadly as the second generation (Min, 2002:13, #1).

The varied and complex social and cultural environments from which children come to the United States also present classification challenges for researchers. Flore Zéphir found five subgroups within the Haitian youth which were significant in the multiple identity choices of the second generation (2001:7). When researchers do distinguish between the foreign-born and native-born children they may find important differences in such outcomes as identity formation and adaptation pathways. The age of the child upon arrival and length of stay in the United States naturally are important variables (Garcia Coll and Magnusen in Booth, 1997:92).

However, the literature indicates that there own socialization experiences in the U.S. becomes relevant as is indicated by the varied generational categories that are constructed for immigrant children and adolescents (Jensen, 2001; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters, and Holdaway, 2008; López and Stanton-Salazar, 2001; Min, 2002; Portes and Rumbaut, 2001; Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco, 2001; Walko, 1989; Zéphir, 2001; Zhou, 2001; Zhou and Bankston, III, 1998). Debate exists in the literature about

how memories in general are formed and recalled (Baddeley, 2010; Berntsen and Bohn, 2010; Brainerd and Reyna, 2010; Brockmeier, 2010; Howe, 2000; Moscovitch, 2010; Wilt, et al, 2010), and children's memories are contested (Chasiotis, et al, Nelson in Handel, et al, 2007; Krackow, 2010; Rumbaut in Portes and DeWind, 2007). While typically older immigrant children and adolescents have more memories of the country of origin, those who were five years old at the time of arrival also have given accounts about their activities and experiences in their country of birth as well as the importance of transitional experiences in the U.S. (Blohm and Lapinsky, 2006). Neglecting to consider the potential impact of remembered experiences of young migrants could undermine our understanding of the integration and adaptation trajectories of this population.

### *Child Agency*

There is a discernible trend within the literature that marginalizes the experiences of immigrant children through depictions of them as cultural mirrors of their parents, or as entities embroiled in the tug and pull of the host society. The predominance of presentations of children as passively caught between two worlds, evidence of child agency in the immigration experience has been documented (Klapper, 2007). The selected works herein illustrate important variables that influence adaptation pathways within the context of reception. Children share the immigration experience with their parents and they also assume

The experiences of immigrant youth are not uniform and their differential outcomes have been linked to various socioeconomic trajectories but there are also other variables that influence the nature of migrant children's integration.

assumed adult responsibilities related to work, and with community functions that required knowledge of English rendering them *culture brokers* for their parents (Jones and Trickett, 2005). Moreover, children within the same household may respond to the immigration experience differently. To illustrate, Eva Hoffman's *Lost in Translation: A Life in a New Language* (1989) depicts the emotional component of an adolescent going through a linguistic and cultural transition when she -year-old sister d i n V experienced a complex evolution by insisting on adherence to conservative Jewish religious traditions that are rejected by her parents and simultaneously by being the first to adopt Western culture. As this account illustrates, developmental factors can also form a lens through which new cultural encounters are interpreted, producing potentially dramatic sibling contrasts in adjustment to the new society.

The differential integration patterns between parents and children in immigrant homes have been noted, and most often the parents have been described as adhering to their culture of origin more so than their children. However, researchers reported an unexpected finding where immigrant adolescents identified to a greater degree with the Russian culture than their parents, and the importance of considering different age groups when assessing acculturation (Birman and Trickett, 2001). Since ethnic identity exploration often increases or is renewed in middle and late adolescence, we can expect differences among siblings who may arrive before, during or after this period (Marks, et al, 2007).

There are additional implications for child agency and integration of immigrant children when they emigrate without their parents. A prominent case was the Mariel boatlift of Cuban refugees in the 1980s where approximately 2,000 unaccompanied minors arrived in the U.S.

without parents and some did not have parents or other relatives waiting for them (Silva, 1985). More recently, Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco found that only 20 percent of the children in their sample came to the United States as a family unit, with most of the children being separated from one or both parents from several months to several years (2001:66-67). Also, during the first nine months of 2004, 9,800 unaccompanied Mexican minors were identified crossing into the United States illegally (Collinson, 2005) seeking democratic freedom, economic opportunity or fleeing conflict (Solomon, 2002:8). Unaccompanied minors arriving in the U.S., legally or illegally, are clearly *first generation* immigrants.

Evidence exists that immigrant children are not routinely passive agents in the migration process (Fass, 2005; Karakayali, 2005). Increasingly it becomes important to focus on the immigrant child as a distinct entity undergoing transitional experiences. The Longitudinal Immigrant Student Adaptation Study (LISA) began in 1997 as a major research initiative of the Harvard Immigration Project led by Carola Suárez-Orozco and Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco.

Whenever it is warranted, they have kept the categories of foreign-born children and U.S.-born children distinct because they “undergo a parallel likely to influence t Hozicr and Suárez-Orozco 2001:7). This y c h e s ” position is supported by research on self-identifications. Differences in the selection of ethnic identities between the foreign-born and native-born American Children were found to be significant Rumbaut (1998), and a lower rate of racial identification was found among the foreign-born youth that may have implications for assimilation (Kasinitiz: 2001:283). In an earlier investigation of transitional experiences of immigrant youth, I found that acculturation, assimilation, re-socialization did not seem to depict the experiences of the high school age

immigrant students that I spoke with. Rather, the process of trans-socialization seems to describe the fluid aspect of their adaptation mechanisms (Seeger-diNovi, 1996). Other researchers have found that in the era of globalization, hybrid identities are formed by youth (Nilan and Feixa, 2006)

### ***Are Children Insulated from the Immigration Experience?***

Some studies on outcomes for immigrant youth exclude children if they arrived in the United States at age 12 or younger, and some observers have found the adolescent migration experiences relevant but not that of children (Kosof, 1996). This is problematic since interviews with adults who arrived as children indicate that there are lasting effects stemming from their immigration experiences, and that they have been emotional when recounting their memories (Marcos, 1982:609). Inbar and Adler (1977) identified that children between the ages of six and eleven, *the vulnerable age*, may be more susceptible to the crisis of immigration than children who are younger or older. Evidence of challenges associated with migration and transitional changes confronted by immigrant children as young as three years old is found in *The Kauffman Early Education Exchange Report* (Donahue, 2002:64-67). Moreover, investigations in Europe revealed that within the peer context of reception immigrant status has been identified as a characteristic for youth victimization (Strohmeier, Kärnä, and Salmivalli, 2011), and observers of social interaction patterns in kindergarten have reported that the degree of local language competence exhibited by immigrant children was associated with being accepted or victimized by their peers (von Grünigen, et al, 2010).

Cultural disjuncture and responses to dramatic changes by each family member may have long-term effects on emotional states. The completion of the developmental process for children

could be hindered by intrafamilial conflicts linked to the fluidity of household compositions generated by immigration and acculturation (Rothe, Tzuang and Pumariega, 2010:693). The emergent self within children may be particularly vulnerable to family dynamics affected by transitional experiences. To illustrate, Diane Wolf (1997) identified that Filipino daughters experienced considerable stress in patriarchal families where they were simultaneously expected to excel academically but remain at home in order that their sexual conduct could be monitored. Fuligini (2006) argues that a strong sense of obligation of foreign-born children toward families influences their emotional and long-term adaptation in the U.S.

Other researchers have noted the import of socioemotional experiences in young immigrant lives. For instance, recent immigrant children, ages 8 through 15, who were exposed to violence before, during and after immigration required interventions for such symptoms as PTSD (posttraumatic stress disorder) and depression (Jaycox, et al, 2002). And Ispa-Vanda (2007) found that refugee children of the Yugoslav wars from 1991 through 1995 often were traumatized and required psychological evaluations and care. Even when support has been provided during resettlement, young children the transition and beyond (Schneider, 1988:218). The emotional component in cultural transitional experiences is frequently neglected in the literature, and yet it is a powerful human force since "...emotions are what give cultural regulate, direct and channel human behavior and in (Turner and Stets, 2005:292). When migrant children leave the homes and communities that are familiar to them, they may experience a sense of loss related to the attachments made during childhood. Separation from those things that individuals have emotional connections with could

engender social losses (Handel, et al, 2007), and cause homesickness (Thurber, et al, 2007).

There are additional issues since what prompts emotions, the nature of their feelings, and how they are manifested may be distinct from that of adults given that children have not completed the developmental stages (Erikson, 1959; 1980). The phenomenon of child responses to their environment is understudied, and increasingly researchers are advocating for the inclusion (Feldman, 2008).

Although extensive research on the foreign-born children's social and emotional impact of their migration transitions during their distinctive developmental stages is limited, there are indications that young immigrants adapt and form a sense of self as they gain knowledge about the world in which individuals live that enables them to master their surroundings and (2000). If children are removed at various developmental stages from contexts in which they have developed a sense of confidence to environments that are initially unfamiliar there may be an impact. Furthermore, migrant children may contend with a stigma linked to their immigrant status (Salmivalli, 2011). It is important to learn about the foreign-born children's migration experience through their own narratives. Missing the voices of immigrant children means that their emotional challenges cannot be understood in their own right nor addressed.

### ***The Emerging Self in Cultural and Linguistic Transitions***

The literature review indicates that the selected works considered herein do not adequately explain the phenomenon of childhood cultural and linguistic transition related to

immigration experiences and the emerging self in U.S. multicultural and multiracial contexts.

Nor is there a focus on child migration within classics on immigration history and ethnic studies.

Instead, at the turn of the century there was concern over cultural conflict between parents and their American-born children, which is reflected in major and valuable sociological works of that

era such as *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (Thomas and Znaniecki, 1919), and *The*

*Jack Roller* (Shaw, 1966). In later works concerned with the sociology of child development

and intergeneration cultural conflicts, the discussion is limited to American-born children raised

in “four leg me homes” (Bossard and Boll, 1966: 3).  
came to America with children.

Cultural and linguistic transitions through immigration may result in varied pathways and identity formation for children especially when we consider the implications of disrupted

developmental states and the influence of the *self*. According to Mead, the *self* evolves from

interaction with others and through learning the roles of others (Mead, 1934:280). However, the

immigrant child's role in the new community is  
since for her/him the roles of others are initially disguised. Responses by the child may be

inhibited, and he/she is confronted by the dilemma of how to interact. As language is acquired,

the roles of the others become more clearly defined, and the new self emerges. The child, then,

may gain an element of predictability about the community in which he/she interacts (Seeger-

diNovi, 1996:4-5). However, is there a lasting effect on the *self* of children who experience

cultural and linguistic transitions? When considering the symbolic interaction framework in

conjunction with identity formation based on role assignment which is central

(1969) social psychological theory, how are children influenced during the period of cultural and

linguistic disruption where the roles may not be understood initially and/or where they may be different? Furthermore, if specific developmental stages as defined by Erikson (1963) are radically disrupted, delayed, shifted, repeated or eliminated as a result of migration, does that

h a v e a l a s t i n g i m p a c t o n t h e *Industry vs. Inferiority* s e l f ?  
i n c l u d e s t h e s c h o o l a g e p o p u l a t i o n , a n d h e c o

... t h i s i s s o c i a l l y a m o s t d e c i s i v e s t a g e : s  
beside and with others, a first sense of *division of labor* and of *equal opportunity* develops at this time. When a child begins to feel that it is the color of his skin, the background of his parents, or the cost of his clothes rather than his wish and his will to learn which will decide his social worth, lasting harm may ensue for the *sense of identity*... ( E r i k s o n , 1 9 5 9 ; 1 9 8 0 ) .

This assessment has particular implications when considered together with the *vulnerable age* for immigrant children, ages 6 through 11, identified by Inbar and Adler (1977) discussed

previously. The next stage identified by Erikson of *Identity vs. Role Confusion* if disrupted

d u r i n g p r e - a d o l e s c e n c e a n d a d o l e s c e n c e m a y c a u s e “ r o  
obvious for child immigrants who enter a cultural context where adolescence is different and/or

does not exist. Garcia Coll and Magnusson argued that while adolescence poses challenges

g e n e r a l l y “... i m m i g r a n t c h i l d r e n h a v e a p a r t i c u  
f o r g e a n i d e n t i t y i n a c o n t e x t t h a t , m a y b e r a  
1997:114).

Coming from different racial and ethnic contexts has implications also for young migrants. Although children before the age of three do not have the capacity of self-reflection, empirical studies indicate that pre school children are able to identify racially and to internalize stereotypes. Tatum found that young children are often engaged actively in countering negative

racial stereotypes (1997:2003). Thus immigrant children and adolescents from different racial and ethnic contexts may be forming complex processes of self-identification.

### ***Youth Immigration Experiences and the Self***

Factors that influence the sense of self include social context, ongoing social interaction, social identity elements (Rosenberg, 1992), and crystallization of the self-concept occurs in interaction with others (Shibutani, 1961). There are distinctions between younger and older children's identity elements in the formation of their self-concept. Whereas younger children are likely to construct their self-concept from physical elements (short-tall, strong-weak), older children retain them as secondary characteristics and add abstract terms from the psychological or emotional realm; i.e. a shift from without to within (Rosenberg, 1992: 254-255). However, the impact of immigration experiences on the self-concept has not been sufficiently explored, and generally a significant body of research on the experiences of immigrant children and adolescents in the United States has not been developed (Oropesa and Landale, 1995:1). In response, distinguished sociologists launched national studies on the *second generation*, and Portes and Rumbaut (2001) in a comparison of ethnic self-identities by foreign-born and U.S.-born children of immigrants identified segmented paths in identity formation and resolution that were manifested in *dissonant, consonant or selective acculturation*. The circumstance where children learn English and the American culture faster than their parents and where there is simultaneous loss of the immigrant culture is characterized as *dissonant acculturation*. In such instances role reversal between children and parents occurs. The opposite situation exists with *consonant acculturation* where abandonment of the original language and culture occurs approximately at the same time across generations. In this most common case,

there is enough “...human capital to accompany monitor it...” (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001: 54) .

*assimilation* preserves parental authority within a context of a large co-ethnic community that serves to “slow down the cultural shift and language and norms” (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001: 190) .

Accordingly, in order to adapt to complex changes and contexts, children develop a range of strategies of self-identification, and there may be the emergence of multiple ethnic identities linked with the consonance or dissonance of the context in which immigrant children are received (Rumbaut and Portes, 1994). Additionally, they found that some adhere to their parents ethnic labels influences the identity choices for second-generation immigrant youth (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001:190). The reasons for the variations found in youth outcomes linked to the difference in pace of acculturation between immigrant parents and children do not always reflect the acculturation gap-distress model. In a review of research studies Telzer (2011) found considerable complexity in the acculturation of immigrant family members with at least four distinctive acculturation patterns; children are either more or less acculturated than the parent in the host culture, and children are more or less acculturated than their parents in the native culture. Telzer found that maladaptive youth outcomes are not exclusively associated with any one pattern of family acculturation, but rather that there may be different explanatory variables for outcomes—including the age at arrival of children and developmental stages.

In earlier research Rumbaut (1994) found significant differences in identity formation between the “foreign born” and “second immigrant” .

...Whether the respondent is a member of the second generation, or of the half-second or 1.5

generation—makes a great difference in the type of ethnic identity selected.

Among the foreign born of national origin, but identify that proportion drops sharply to 11 percent (1994:763-765).

Mary Waters (1994; 2001) discerned that race is a key factor in the formation of ethnic and racial identities of second generation immigrant youth in New York City. West Indian and Haitian-origin adolescents respond to racism against blacks, mutual stereotyping, and relative privilege given to Caribbean blacks by either identifying as Americans, as ethnic Americans and some distancing from black Americans or maintaining immigrant identities (2001:802). In contrast to the West Indian and Haitian experience, earlier research identified ethnic options or “symbolic ethnicity” that was open to whites in the U.S. mainstream (Gans, 1979; Waters, 1990).

Young immigrants are affected by a multitude of factors such as transnational dynamics (Levitt and Waters, 2002; Min, 2002; Zéphir, 2001), their own immigration experience (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco, 2001), context of reception, parental influence, socioeconomic status (Zhou and Bankston, 1998), and second language communication (Clément, Noels and Deneault, 2001; Phinney et al, 2001). Although all of these factors may influence any number of adaptation mechanisms, identity is often key. Developing identity narratives that privilege part of that experience seems to factor into the complex unfolding of immigrant identities.

...The question „What are you? while vague solely from its syntax, it is often under your ethnic background? In this way the consequential in that it can cause the person in a short span of time to summarize what can be a complex web of allegiances, experiences, histories, and identities. Thus a person must define himself or herself not in terms of a totality of being, but select among the many options the one that stand out among the rest. Not only is this potentially difficult, but it also causes the person some distress since

the selection of one may imply the forsaking (or at least lessening) of another (David in Myers, 2005:376).

The stress associated with self-identification or ascription by others in a new cultural context is compounded when the migration has been punctuated with trauma, and it may be manifested differently based on the developmental stage of the immigrant child. Additionally, immigrant children experience a lifelong process of adaptation and acculturation that may be reflected in a dual frame of reference and biculturalism (Garcia Coll and Magnusen in Booth, 1997:104). Young immigrants also experience the pull of the first culture and parental expectations simultaneously with the pervasive American influences. Nonetheless, immigrant children *bring* to the U.S. and to their family their own culture, language, and attitudes.

Although the parent's role in relationship to routinely mirror their foreign parent's culture, language (Stepick, et al in Rumbaut and Portes, 2001). In more recent research, Rumbaut argued for a methodology that disaggregates the foreign-born children from the native-born children that takes into consideration such factors as age of arrival, life stages, and sociodevelopmental contexts (2007:345), and he identifies the problems encountered with clarifying and operationalizing the terms "reliant immigrant generation" that has included "a large segment of children and who are often regarded as members" (Rumbaut and DeWind, 2007:343).

...Theoretically, cohorts may be hypothesized to differ significantly with regard to a variety of adaptation outcomes, from socio-economic attainment and mobility to language and acculturation. But that is an open empirical question, the answer to which requires research that breaks down the first and second generations by nativity (of self and parents) and age/life stage

at arrival into distinct generational segments, rather than lumping together, as is often the case, the 1.25, 1.5, 1.75, 2.0 and 2.5 cohorts into a de facto second generation... (Rumbaut in Portes and DeWind ,

Empirical research to understand the reason for the variation in outcomes for such aspects as self-identification and adaptation pathways of first generation immigrant children based on methodologies that reflect their distinct characteristics and experience is necessary as well as timely . While the literature on the “second era, a theoretical model that comprehensively addresses the complex phenomenon of transitions for “-b o r a i g m i n o r s , i . e . the “first generation qualitative studies that include the standpoint of immigrant children would advance this endeavor. Narratives of immigrants recollections of their childhood of origin and migration could elucidate processes that are understudied. The nature of child migrants memories at different ages at the time of migration phenomenon associated with disruption of developmental stages in the first cultural context. It is anticipated that this study may contribute in some measure to increase our understanding of the child migrant s experiences and may continue to be meaningful and resonate in young adulthood.

### ***White Ethnic College Students in Multiracial/Multicultural Context***

As discussed previously, Waters (1990) discerned *ethnic options* to be a mode of identification that has been open to white immigrants. European immigrants in the past were eventually able to assimilate into mainstream society as *whites* or have the alternative of selectively celebrating and expressing their ethnicity. The consequence of this advantage is disavowal by conservative assimilated whites that race continues to be significant within

American society (Winant, 1995). Examining the identity choices white ethnic college students make in multicultural and multiracial urban campuses may be illuminating.

Haines (2007) has found that the college campus and classroom may be an arena for identity shifts among immigrant students where immigrant college students may select alternative identities to ethnic identifications. Eastern European immigrant students come from the former Soviet Republics that are diverse with respect to racial/ethnic composition, political ideology, nationalism, and religion. Consequently, their affiliations with groups may be variable and they may not necessarily identify as *white*. Historical context of immigration also impacts their perspective on ethnic and racial attitudes. Whereas boundaries may emerge based on race for some, nationalism may have greater import as is evidenced among the Kosovar Albanians who declared their independence in February of 2008. Thus regardless of their allegiances and self-identification within their country of origin, when they enter a multicultural/multiracial academic space they may be ascribed different characteristics that could include a racial or ethnic ascription by others. If race is more salient than ethnicity or nationalism, theoretical perspectives captured within the Cross Nigrescence model white context (2001), and the ~~He~~ ~~hite~~ identity model for white context (Tatum, 1997) may not be relevant for young *ethnic white* immigrants from the former Soviet Union entering a multiracial/multicultural space. Additional considerations on race and identity will be discussed in the following section.

Overall, the literature considered herein has utility in analyzing the broad experiences of immigrants, but it also has limitations for understanding the impact of cultural and linguistic transitions for immigrant youth in the U.S. context. As has been discussed previously, the

f i n d i n g s f r o m r e s e a r c h o n t h e “ s e c o n d g e n e r a t i o n ” methodology of collecting data about children who reside with at least one immigrant parent.

Consequently, analytic models most often focus on what is termed the adult first generation and the second generation; i.e. children of immigrants. Regrettably, limited research has been conducted on the impact of the foreign-born children referred to as the 1.5 generation. Most of the 1.5 research category constitutes children from birth through ages 12 or 13, and they are frequently conflated with the native-born American children of immigrants. By examining the experiences of school-age immigrant children by age of arrival, we could expect to find factors related to their migration process that have impacted their racial/ethnic and/or national self-identifications and associated adaptation trajectories. Importantly, interviews with child migrants from Eastern Europe could explicate critical aspects of their lives that may not have been given sufficient consideration such as the emotional import of their migration and transitional experiences, peer contexts of reception, self-identifications, attitudes toward ethnic and racial diversity, standpoints on race related to privilege, social interaction patterns in young adulthood, import of immigrant status, and potential lasting effects of migration and integration.

Eastern European immigrants from the post-communist nations are an understudied group even though they represent a prominent population in the U.S. An investigation of the attitudes held by young Eastern European immigrants from post-communist nations could provide information about their integration as well as the characteristics of their identity choices. With an intensifying nationalism in some of the former Soviet Republics the question arises over the degree of allegiance to the country of origin and concomitant ethnic identity. Allegiance to the U.S. by immigrant populations with a growing presence has been questioned. To illustrate,

Huntington (2004) has argued that the U.S. identity forged by Anglo Protestants is threatened by Hispanic immigrants who adhere to their own culture and who demonstrate greater loyalty to their country of origin. This highly controversial article stimulated a debate regarding issues of national and individual identity preferences, patriotism, and associated assimilation of immigrants. Where the Eastern European students position themselves on these dimensions could shed light on their vision of incorporation.

The dominant theme in the immigrant literature on socialization focuses on parental influence in the outcome *top down approach*. It is argued that parents' experiences may not sufficiently explain variations in child outcomes. By taking into account the child migrant's narratives of their experience integration in the U.S. schools and neighborhoods, and the emotions accompanying these experiences our understanding of this immigrant cultural and linguistic transitions in childhood are accompanied with emotions that may have consequences in the migration processes. Yet, the literature on immigrant youth minimizes emotional issues. Instead, the research stresses issues of social mobility, especially in the area of education, and focuses on factors that impede upward mobility such as acquiring oppositional identities. Influences in adaptation pathways associated with race identity and *whiteness* will be the focus of the next section.

### **Race, Identity and Whiteness Literature**

In this section I will discuss selected works that address issues of race, class, white dominance, and identity formation since they remain relevant for immigrants in the contemporary immigrant streams to the U.S. Immigrant groups entering U.S. society at different

historical periods find the context of reception variable for different ethnic and racial groups.

The challenges facing minority groups include uncertainty related to acceptance by majority groups who impact the incorporation process. Alba developed a macro framework of *bright* and *blurred* boundaries; that is, when ethnic boundaries are bright, there is a clear understanding on what side of the boundary a group is located. However, blurry boundaries are arenas for self-presentation and social representation where social locations are ambiguous, and he argues that the minority-majority boundary as it has been institutionalized “... affects processes by which individuals gain access to (2005:20-49). However, questions remain as to how ethnic or racial boundary formation becomes negotiated in micro spaces that include educational institutions. Grasmuck and Kim (2010) take up the issue of boundary formation among non-white immigrant and native-minority students finding that students tended to divide into two dominant mixing patterns (interactive pluralism, and fragmented pluralism). Questions remain about the positioning of white immigrants in such contexts who had arrived during childhood, and through the interviews with Eastern European students we discerned nuanced patterns of social interaction that also reflected the saliency of immigrant status.

White ethnics may have encountered urban multicultural contexts in their country of origin, but in the U.S. the connotation for *whiteness* linked to historical relationships between whites and African Americans and other people of color is distinctive. Minority group incorporation for people of color in U.S. society continues to be pertinent. In particular the history of formal and informal exclusion of African Americans, and their response to prejudice and discrimination became the focus of scholarly inquiry. Within the field of clinical

psychology there was an assumption of pathology; that is, self-hatred by African Americans, and was consequently reflected within the stages included in Nigrescence theory. In 1971, William E. Cross, Jr. published *Black Conversion Experiences: Toward a Psychology of Black Identity Development* based on his outlined personal experiences and observations he made of reactions by blacks during the civil rights era and Black Power Movement (Cross, 2001:32). Cross's model has received considerable scholarly attention and was empirically tested in part due to his distinctive perspective on the role of race, ethnicity and culture in black identity formation. Essentially, he argued that "...black identity development is a process that is shaped by the social context" (Cross, 2001:35). Over time, Cross altered his perspective and modified his model to include the stages of pre-encounter, encounter, immersion-emersion, immersion, internalization, and internalization-commitment. His revised Nigrescence model takes into account the contemporary experience of black identity formation that includes diversity in *Blackness*, and Parham has expanded his model to include the concept of *recycling* stages triggered by events within the life span (Cross, 1991:220-221). Based on this rationale, dislocation of social context where the meaning of race becomes altered could potentially affect the self-identification of immigrant youth in notable ways.

Race continues to demarcate boundaries between groups and remains a critical determinant of life outcomes. The psychological and cultural advantage in the economic and political realms for those with light skin has been identified (Roediger 1991, 202; Winant, 1995, 2001). However, the dominant groups not only maintain their power through ethno racial systems and practices, but through processes where race is mediated by class, gender and

sexuality (Wray, 2006:5). Although it seems intuitive that a multiracial society would be more likely to be a just society, race diversity does not eliminate white supremacy. According to Mills, "...*Mestizaje* (race mixture) the differential ideal valorization of the European component and the goal of *blanqueamiento*, whitening, and to this socially meliorist end many Latin-American nations have had white (2003:37). Similarly, Roediger (2002) assesses that hybridity is not the solution since people have intermarried for over 140 years. As long as dominant groups have discretionary ability to draw the color line, biracial and multiracial groups remain vulnerable. Racial dominance is facilitated through the invisibility of racial actions that normalizes cumulative advantage of *whiteness*. Racial oppression, white dominance, white privilege, and perpetuation of white supremacy are central tenets of the literature on *whiteness*. Yet, a critical theory of *whiteness* is still required that defines the concept of *whiteness*, includes the mechanisms that perpetuate white supremacy, and identifies *whiteness* as a structuring property that conditions social practices, cultural representations, and the formation of identity (Owen, 2007:207).

Despite the contributions made through whiteness studies toward unraveling the dynamic of relationships based on race, this academic field has been criticized for not sufficiently critiquing the role of *power*. By relying on Foucault's juridical conception impeded from capturing how power is manifested in relation to the so obviously bio-political phenomenon of racial (2005:534-535). According to McWhorter, *bio-power* is envisioned as a confluence of two forms of *normalizing power*, micro-level disciplines and macro-level populations that is rooted in historical transformation originating in Western societies. To disrupt networks of racial

oppression, frameworks of *whiteness* with an exclusive focus on racial identity are insufficient

( *i b i d* : 5 5 3 ) . A n d F r a n z F e n n e b e r g m p f b i r e n s a r t n s o m b o m l t y n e g a t e s t h e r e a l i t y o f “ w h i t e e n t i e m e n t ” i n

There is a debate in the field of whiteness studies regarding issues that include white privilege,

r e l a t i o n s o f p o w e r , r a c i a l s t r a t i f i c a t i o n , a n d e l i m i n a t e c o n d i t i o n s o f i t s o w n e x i s t e n c e . . . ” (

2001:3). These scholarly works are representative of divergent views held by people in the U.S.

population about race and whether white entitlement exists. How white immigrant college

students from different historical, ideological, racial, and geographical contexts align themselves

in the discussion concerning whiteness and privilege will be explored.

Examining the attitudes held by Eastern European students toward race is pertinent since

complex interconnections of increasing racism in Eastern European countries have been

observed from the standpoint of the State, nationalism, and identity in relationship to the *other*.

To illustrate, anti-Semitism in Poland has served to support a *fantasy* national identity in that

n a t i o n d e s p i t e t h e p a r a d o x “ t h a t t h e r e a r e v i c t i m s a n d c o n c l u d e s t h a t s i n c e r a c i s m i s r e q u i r e d t o b o l s t e r a n “ i l l u s o r y n a t i o n a l i s t s u p p o r t r e l a t i o n s h i p b e t w e e n r a c i s m a n d n a t i o n a l i s m e x i s t s ( 1 9 9 5 : 8 7 ) . T h r o u g h t h e p r o c e s s o f

ideological interpellation the *other* has been discursively constructed (Althusser, 1971), and

through narrative accounts relational meanings are attributed to the selves and others in identity

discourse (Vila, 2000; 2005). Tensions between asserted and ascribed ethnic and racial identities

have been observed in the process of constructing self-identifications (Cornell and Hartmann,

2007). Through the participants' narratives we witness their reactions to racism.

Although discourse on identity formation includes conceptualization of opposites; i.e., the self and other, individual and society, and the subject and the object, it does not generally capture the nuance of collective identity experience (Hall, 2000:145). For instance, the ascribed identity of Black was not a natural alternative for Caribbean immigrants to Great Britain who were denied an English or British identity. In that context it required rearticulation.

... In that very struggle is a re-cognition of oneself as a new process of identification, the emergence into visibility of a new subject. A subject that was always there, but emerging, historically.

The notion of *Blackness* may be contested since being Black in one society may be different from being Black in another. This argument could be made for the notion of *Whiteness*. However, the *whiteness* theoretical perspectives do not fully address the immigrant experience, and the focus on white immigrant assimilation and identity literature has been on ethnicity rather than race. Consequently, the nuanced story of the Eastern European immigrant experience still needs to be told.

...When thinking about their identity and pluralize issues in terms of „whiteness“ or, in more modern terminology, ethnicity. In the interwar era, for new immigrants and their children „becoming“ Caucasian their minds they already were white. Their struggle was taking place in the battlefield of ethnic diversity... the Slovak nationality-based epithets, contempt, and antipathies into a questioning of individual or group „whiteness“ can distort new immigrant generations (Aleš, 2006: 226).

It is essential to take into account the perspectives of white ethnic immigrants to fully understand the phenomenon of racial attitudes and *whiteness* in American society. Diversity also

exists within the same white ethnic group, and conflict can ensue between co-ethnics from different immigration streams (Schneider, 1988). Moreover, white ethnic immigrant families may have entered residential communities that are segregated by race and/or ethnicity (Goode and Schneider, 1994) that may influence attitudes held by students entering a U.S. multicultural university setting.

Further support for the need to investigate racial and ethnic identity formation among white ethnic college-age students comes from research on an urban university campus that indicated being *white* was salient, but ethnic affiliation was not, and that *whiteness* is constructed socially and manipulated politically (Gallagher, 1997:231). Additionally, the climate of affirmative action within a *colorblind* society may have contributed to the enhancement of racial self-identification by *non-ethnic whites* that perceive themselves to be in competition with *non-whites*. It is also important to recognize that individuals may have multiple identities that may include country of origin, race, and nationality (Hall, 2000) as well as region, gender, religion, class, age, and occupation (Vila, 2000). At the same time, the *space* within which identities are forged is also not a fixed entity (Giampapa, 2004), and translocation of space may bring to the process of identity formation unique components. When taking into account the fluid and subjective nature of racial ascription and self-definition as well as the potential social and political consequences of this phenomenon, gaining understanding of the Eastern European immigrants' perspectives is relevant. The explication of two contemporary white immigrant groups, Russians and Ukrainians, who find themselves facing late adolescence development in the context of daily encounters within a multiracial university student body should provide us with important insights about these topics related to race, identity and

privilege. Concomitantly, the overlapping history of these two national groups and their socialization in the former soviet republics may influence their perspectives and integration within the U.S. context. A summary of the population characteristics and historical background of these two populations follows.

### **Characteristics of the Russian and Ukrainian Populations**

According to the U.S. Census of 2000, there were 1,906,056 immigrants from Eastern Europe in the U.S. Of those 340,177 were born in Russia and 275,153 in Ukraine (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000; Retrieved 4/21/08). Refugees from Eastern and Western Europe emigrated to the U.S. at the end of World War II in large numbers, and later after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 there was an increase in asylum seekers from the former Soviet Republics. The U.S. Census Bureau (2006) reports that the number of permanent residents from Russia and Ukraine who emigrated under the refugee acts from 1991-2003 is as follows:

	<u>1991-2000</u>	<u>2001-2002</u>	<u>2003</u>
Russia	60,404	9,847	1,738
Ukraine	109,739	21,731	3,350

Moreover, since 1990 several of the Eastern European immigrant-sending countries", "in 1995 with 21,344 and Ukraine ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in 1994 with 21,010 immigrants (Robila, 2008:548-549).

### ***Historical Context***

We will first discuss the Russian immigration. There are several distinct historical periods of Russian immigration to the U.S., but the focus of this overview will begin with the late nineteenth century. Although there were immigrants who left Russia to escape poverty and

religious persecution in earlier time periods (Behnke, 2006), it was not until 1867 that Russia sold Alaska to the U.S. From 1880 through 1914 there were 90,000 Russians in the U.S. with most coming from Galicia and Belorussia that represent the current territories of Poland, Ukraine and Belarus (Gold, 2007:581). Most of the Russian immigrants were peasants who found employment in industries and farming in Southern New Jersey, Ohio and Illinois (ibid:581). However, the Russian Jews that migrated predominately from urban centers were more skilled and literate.

The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, the Russian civil war (1918-1921), and its associated political turmoil stimulated the departure of ideological dissidents who opposed the Soviet Union. Approximately 30,000 political refugees who represented largely the Russian elite arrived in the U.S. between 1920 through 1940. Religious refugees dominated the immigration wave from 1970 through 1988, and at that time over 100,000 Jews, Catholics, Pentacostalists and Armenians emigrated (ibid:582). During the six decades of the cold war the U.S. supported generous resettlement programs for refugees from the Soviet Union that included an ambitious program in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (Schneider, 1988). Even so, the effect of the cold war and the concomitant negative attitude held by Americans toward perceived Russian ideology impacted Russian assimilation, and many Russian European American identity (Gold, 2007:583).

The contemporary wave of immigrants begins after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and *Glasnost* encouraged by Gorbachev, when a wave of highly educated immigrants came to the U.S. for employment opportunities within the fields of medicine, engineering, computer fields and small businesses (ibid:582). The egalitarian educational system in the former Soviet

Union has been credited for the advantage experienced by this cohort. To illustrate, in 1981 there were 67 percent of women in the Soviet Union compared to 16.5 percent of women in America who worked as engineers, technicians, and other professions. Moreover, the educational performance of Russian children is high compared to both other immigrant children and native born American children. At the same time, 30 percent of former Soviet Union immigrants who arrived recently receive assistance and experience higher rates of unemployment (ibid:586).

Social adjustment of the current wave of Russian immigrants is related to complex factors. To illustrate, the generational impact is noted within the co-ethnic Russian communities where the elderly choose to reside. Divisions within these ethnic communities are based on such criteria as identification with co-nationals, class, ideology, region of origin, occupation, religiosity, and length of time in the U.S. Also, self-identifications are influenced by the change in context. In Russia Jews were considered a national group and their passports were stamped “ J e w i s h . ” I n t h e U . S . b e i n g J e w i s h i s a s s o c i Russian Jewish émigrés have identity options. Overall the recent arrivals from Russia come to the U.S. primarily for educational opportunities, and it is anticipated that they will not experience the discrimination as prior Russian immigrants had since they come from largely white European origins who are highly educated, have legal status, and benefit from networks with established co-ethnics (Gold, 1967:580-588).

Ukrainian immigration parallels but is distinct from Russian immigration. Ukrainians and Russians share an overlapping and at times contentious history that resonates particularly for Ukrainian nationals who continue to want to be recognized as a completely separate entity. The

division of the territory of the Ukraine by the empires of Austria-Hungary and Russia between 1870 and 1899, relegated Ukrainians as citizens of one of the three nationalities, and they were referred to as *Ruthenians* or *Carpatho-Rusyns* (Radzilowski, 2007:13). It is estimated that between 240,000 to 500,000 Ukrainians came to the U.S. during this time to seek job opportunities since most represented a destitute class of farmers created through a system of oppression that included slavery in both empires (Miziuk, 2008:2), however, under the Russian tsar the Ukrainians suffered the most (Radzilowski, 2007:26). When the beleaguered Ukrainians emigrated to the U.S., they encountered obstacles in the new country as well. Americans discriminated against Ukrainians in the field of employment since they considered them to be inferior compared to *white English stock*, unacceptable citizens, and referred to as Russians. Nonetheless, they did find employment in the coal mines within Pennsylvania and West Virginia, and farmed in the states of Virginia, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, and Texas. Ukrainians established their own Catholic churches and organizations in order to maintain their Ukrainian identity and avoided being subsumed by the existing Russian and Hungarian organizations (Miziuk, 2008:2).

The period preceding WWI, 1899 through 1914, was marked by increased Ukrainian migration (254,376) to the U.S. (Radzilowski, 2007:15). Shevchenko and other influential intellectuals inspired Ukrainians to seek freedom and opportunities in North America. This immigration impulse was referred to as *American Fever*, but it was dampened during the period between WWI and WWII as a result of the “Red” (Miziuk, 2008:3). Despite this restrictive climate 40,000 Ukrainians emigrated essentially for political reasons (Radzilowski, 2007:15). The events of the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 led by

the Communists removed the Russian tsar and created the Soviet Union, and on January 22, 1918 Ukraine declared a short-lived independence that was crushed by the Soviet Union in 1922. Yet, the periods of 1932-33 and 1937-38 were the most horrific for the Ukrainians since dictator Joseph Stalin and his associates were responsible for the deliberate extermination of seven to ten million Ukrainian people through the *Artificial Terror-Famine* and executions, respectively (Miziuk, 2008:4).

The Displaced Persons Act of 1948 became the vehicle of immigration for 85,000 of four million Ukrainians who were displaced after WWII (Radzilowski, 2007:15). This population included ex-prisoners of war from the Soviet Army, survivors of Nazi concentration camps, and the forced laborers in Austria and Germany who were deemed *sub-human* by the Nazis due to their Slavic lineage (Miziuk, 2008:4). In the DP camps in Germany and Austria, the Ukrainians “... f o r societies, schools, religious institutions, political parties, benefit organizations, the whole array of community life...” (Lushnycky, 2007:2). Soviet rule is well documented, and those who were forced to leave refugee camps and return to the Soviet Union by British and American soldiers were sent to Siberia and/or mistreated. Those who were able to leave Ukraine during Soviet rule were typically well-educated professionals who settled where they found jobs rather than in established Ukrainian communities. Exiles from Ukraine were involved in anti-communist activities in the U.S. during the cold war, and supported Ukrainian nationalist interests. Eventually, the Soviet Union weakened and then collapsed in 1991. And on August 24<sup>th</sup> in the same year Ukraine declared its independence which ensued in the emigration of 200,000 Ukrainians to the U.S. from 1991 through 2000. Although Ukrainian immigrants have in common with Russian immigrants an appreciation for

education and family life, tensions remain between the groups associated with their shared history since some Russian leaders argue for a Russia that includes Ukraine.

Ideological and political developments in Eastern Europe may influence attitudes held by Russian and Ukrainian immigrants. For example, the collapse of the Soviet Union was viewed as the nexus for a renewed democratic Eastern European wave, and an invigoration of idealized democracy in the West. Instead, the disintegration of Communism has ushered in a retreat of the liberal-democratic tendency, and an emergence of boundary formation grounded in nationalism that is manifested in anti- a l i e n p o l i c i e s a n d i d e *post-mogley*n ( Ž i ž e k , *racism* or *metaracism* has emerged that seems to be covert and more complex in comparison to the traditional forms of racism.

Overall, Russian and Ukrainian immigration reflects the historical complexity of ideological, economic, and cultural interconnections between two Slavic groups. The attitudes held within Russian and Ukrainian groups as well as between those two groups are not uniform. Reasons for emigration, political dominance of the Russians over the Ukrainians, shifting social and geographical boundaries, and the impact of the Soviet Union on both groups influence the identity formation and adaptation in the U.S. context. Furthermore, the nationalistic movement among Ukrainians and the political and military enterprise by the Russians may continue to influence both Russian and Ukrainian immigrants who are here. Russia and Ukraine are engaged in establishing cultural, racial, linguistic, regional and political identification stemming from independence gained from the Soviet Union. Whereas Russia is highly centralized within Moscow or St. Petersburg , U k r a i n e s p o w e r r e s t s i n s e v e r a l variant experience under Soviet rule and, therefore, it has implications for difference in

Ukrainian identity formation (Wanner, 1998: xxvi). Gender roles within each of the two nations may also have evolved differentially (Ashwin and Lytkina, 2004; Govorun and Vornyk, 1997), and these differences may impact family dynamics as well as the migration process. Overall, young migrants entering the U.S. from these regions may have been influenced variably by the existing complex political and national environments as well as by the Russian and Ukrainian educational, cultural and religious organizations established in urban centers within the U.S. These factors taken together with their integration experiences may impact their adaptation pathways and self-identification modes.

### **Research Questions and Organization of the Study**

In order to increase our understanding of the immigration experience and transitions of young émigrés in the U.S.; that is, how the primary socialization and secondary socialization may influence their identity formations and adaptation pathways in an urban university setting I have interviewed 34 students who migrated to the U.S. during childhood. And since in comparison to other ethnic groups, less is known about the experiences of Eastern European immigrants from the post-Communist era, Russian and Ukrainian students were invited to participate in this study. The literature considered herein indicates that there is limited information regarding immigrant children on several critical dimensions including their emotional states during the period of acculturation. This is particularly problematic since the emotional response by children to dramatic changes in their lives may have long-term consequences. To illustrate, a major upheaval for children is associated with the divorce of their parents, and researchers have found children within various developmental stages react with a range of emotions that include grief, depression, powerlessness, and anger (Eleoff, 2003). While

the experience of divorce and emigration during childhood are not parallel events, they have in common the propensity to evoke powerful emotional responses that affect children during the upheaval as well as in its aftermath. Through emigration children contend with factors that include uprooting from all that is familiar and the loss that comes from separation from family, friends and their way of life. Additionally, migrant children integrate into a new cultural and linguistic context while they simultaneously need to adjust to losses. These major shifts in children's environment Since school age children may be particularly vulnerable when they experience cultural disruption, and since less is known about their emotional reaction to these changes during primary socialization, the focus of this investigation will be on this specific population of immigrant children and their emotional acculturation.

The research questions for this study apply to immigrant students from Eastern Europe who migrated during childhood, and who have entered a multicultural and multiracial urban university setting. The questions in this context take the following form:

1. What is the nature of the recollections of the children of the former republics? Do those who were young children at the time of emigration have recollections, and if so, what form do they take? Are there variations in the composition of the respondent memories when taking account age at the time of emigration?
2. What impact does cultural and linguistic disruption during childhood through immigration processes have? Was the transitional experience an emotional one, and if so, how were emotions manifested? How do school-age children respond to the migration experience? Does the overall

effect of a cultural and linguistic transition during childhood make a lasting imprint on perceived emotional centeredness and identity formation?

3. What factors influence variations in the emotional impact of early migration as well as ethnic and/or national identities of these white immigrants?

4. What were their attitudes toward race in their first country in comparison to those held in the U.S. context? How have they positioned themselves in terms of U, S. racial categories, especially in terms of how they have come to think of their whiteness as young adults? Has exposure to university academic courses and/or activities impacted on their self-identification process? If so, what particular experiences are most salient?

5. When Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students, generally assumed to be white ethnics, enter a multicultural academic setting in the U.S. they may encounter *white* ascription by others and meanings attached to that label. Will they incorporate the white label into their self-identity and all of the negative connotations linked to the dominant group status within a racist society? Or will they adhere to a national, ethnic or other identification developed in their country of origin and/or in their home? Or will the exposure to a diverse student population, ethnic organizations, or student curriculums impact their self-identifications?

The following chapters will explore these issues in terms of the research findings of this project. The research methodology for this exploratory study is presented in Chapter Two. Then, in Chapter Three I explore the recollections of the Russian and Ukrainian university students about their way of life in their country of origin with specific focus on their neighborhoods, schools, traditions, attitudes of peers and neighbors. Chapter Four includes a discussion of pre-

emigration processes, degree of child agency in the decision-making phase, feelings and events related to the journey to the U.S., and the immigrant children had upon arrival. Chapter Five focuses on the transitional experiences and challenges of childhood faced by the Eastern European students, the feelings that this process engendered when these young immigrants entered U.S. society and adapted to their new households, neighborhoods and schools are considered. Their assessment of distinctions in experiences between native-born American siblings, other family members and their own is included. Chapter Six examines the first generation in the U.S. Chapter Seven is devoted to the experience as Eastern Europeans entering an ethnically and racially diverse urban university campus, relationships among Russian and Ukrainian students, and social interaction patterns with other students on the campus. Further, the meaning of race in the U.S. context and in their first country is discussed as well as their perspectives regarding collective "white" discrimination. Finally, Chapter Eight presents the overall conceptual implications of the findings of this study of first generation Eastern European immigrant students who arrived during childhood and their adaptation mechanisms during young adulthood on a multicultural campus.

## CHAPTER 2

### RESEARCH METHODS

A study was designed to investigate the potential influences on identity formation and concomitant adaptation mechanisms of white ethnic immigrant students who arrived in the U.S. during their early school years. The target populations are Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students who migrated from Eastern Europe during the post-communist era and were attending one of two institutions of higher education in a large northeastern American city. We selected the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students to participate in this study since compared to the other Eastern European groups on the university campus they were comparatively larger and because of their shared history. The population characteristics and historical background of the Russian and Ukrainian national groups is provided in Chapter One.

#### Research Context

There were two research sites selected for this investigation; Victory State and Metro College (pseudonyms) are located within a large Northeastern city in different locales. Whereas Victory State is located in a predominantly black inner city neighborhood Metro College is situated close to the center of the city near a gentrifying predominantly white area. Both Victory State and Metro College are public and state affiliated educational institutions with an ethnically/racially diverse undergraduate student body. At the time of the study, Victory State had an enrollment over 34,000 students, offered 125 bachelors programs, and had an undergraduate student population that consisted of 58 percent white, 19 percent African American, 9 percent Asian, 3 percent Hispanic students. Compared to other universities in the U.S, in 2006 Victory State was ranked among the

top ten in terms of diversity. Reflective of Victory State's diverse student organizations, thirds of them could be considered of white ethno-racial social spaces...” -227)( In comparison, Metro and Kim, College had a student body that more closely reflected the city demographics during the time of the investigation, and its racial/ethnic composition was African American, 25 percent white, 7 percent Asian, 7 percent Hispanic, 10 percent unknown, and 4 percent “other.” Among the colleges with was ranked in the top 20 percent, and it offered over 70 degree and certificate programs in art, science, business, technology and liberal arts to 18,023 students when the study was conducted. Whereas Victory State has accommodations for those that live on campus, Metro College is exclusively attended by commuter students and represents a lower academic tier of higher education.

When walking through the Victory State and Metro College campuses the racial diversity is apparent. Students on their way to classes or interacting informally in the spaces throughout the campuses are of many different racial and ethnic backgrounds. Students of the same ethnic/racial backgrounds are typically seen in same group clusters in various parts of the Victory State campus whereas this type of socialization was not evident during the interview phase at Metro College. Since the interviews with students took place during the summer months at Metro College, the nature of socialization may have been different compared to the Fall and Spring semesters. According to the student informants, in the summer most of the students at Metro College come in for specific classes and do not socialize afterwards. However, during their class breaks the pattern observed by the Russian and Ukrainian student informants is

for people to mingle regardless of racial or ethnic background. It was also the observation of a Metro College staff person that students on their campus are not mixing across ethnic/racial groups, and that occasionally some may gather who are of similar race or ethnicity.

### **The Sample**

The selected sample of Ukrainians and Russian college participants replicates the characteristics of the larger Ukrainian and Russian population within the U.S. as discussed above. In order to recruit Ukrainian and Russian university students who emigrated during childhood a snowball sampling strategy was utilized whereby participants with these characteristics referred other students who possessed similar characteristics. Through this snowball sampling strategy, 19 Russian and 15 Ukrainian participants were identified who arrived in the United States from Russia and Ukraine between the ages of 5 and 13 were interviewed. However, two participants who arrived at age 14 and four self-identified Russians from other former Soviet Republic were included in order to facilitate additional comparisons. By considering the potential implications of the developmental stage associated with adolescence, insights may be gained in how their immigration experiences are similar or dissimilar to children who arrive at younger ages. Likewise, comparing the childhood migration experiences of students from the former Soviet Republics of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan to those who arrived from Russia and Ukraine could elucidate the possible differences that exist within the Eastern European population.

An endeavor was made to have an equal number of participants who were male and female. Although the Russian participants were nearly evenly divided by gender (with ten females and nine males) it was challenging to recruit Ukrainian male students who met the

research criteria. Consequently, eleven Ukrainian female students and four Ukrainian male students participated in this project which will have to be taken into account when gender comparisons are made. The age of the students at the time of the interview ranged from 18 to 27 with the median age being 21.

Given their attendance at a U.S. university all students were able to speak English. Students were recruited broadly, and in order to reduce bias several sources of recruitment were utilized. I contacted twelve diverse academic departments at Victory State and Metro College and ethnic organizations where Eastern European students are members and/or where they participate in activities in order to identify students.

The final sample consists of respondents who were born between the years of 1981 and 1990. Thus all 34 Russian and Ukrainian participants were born prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, and they emigrated during the post-communist era to the United States after 1991. Most of the participants arrived from 1993 through 1999 [ $N=26$ ; 76.5%] with almost 40% have arrived in either 1997 or 1999.

The age of arrival to the United States of the 34 Russian and Ukrainian college student participants ranged from 5 years to 14, but almost three-fourths (73.5%) arrived between the ages of 5 and 10 and half of this group arrived at either age 9 or 10. This pattern was similar within both national groups. Thus the overall sample represents a cohort of university students who came to the United States during their central childhood years and spent their adolescence in this relatively new host society.

The range of time that the foreign-born Eastern European students have lived in the U.S. is from 5 to 18 years with most of the students ( $N=24$ ; or 70.6%) falling within the time range of 10 to 15 years, the median being twelve years [ $N=7$ ; 20.6%].

With respect to citizenship status, 27 (79.4%) of the 34 participants stated that they held U.S. Citizenship. Of the non-citizens, one participant had made application for U.S. citizenship, two participants held “dual” citizenship, and exclusively.

The participants represent a broad range of majors that include liberal arts, science, business, engineering, graphic arts, medicine, and pre law. Additionally, the majority of the college student participants were upper level students ( $N=22$ ; 64.7%). Of the 22 upper level students, 16 (72.7%) were juniors and seniors and the remaining 6 (27.3%) were recent college graduates. Nine sophomores and three freshmen also participated in the study, and the freshmen had experienced two college semesters prior to the interview.

At the time of the interview, the students generally related that they were making good academic progress, and their current GPA (Grade Point Average) ranged from 2.6 to 4.0. The mean GPA for the 34 Russian and Ukrainian student participants is 3.42, and was 3.78 in their high school. The comparative mean GPA of the Russian and Ukrainian students for college and high school is similar although the college mean GPA was somewhat higher for the Russian student participants (3.58) than for the Ukrainians (3.21), as well as for their high school average GPAs 3.95 and 3.56, respectively.

The parents of the Eastern European participants were relatively highly educated prior to arrival to the United States ( $N=32$ ) of their mothers who participated in the study.

are present had attained education beyond high degrees and 15 (30.6%) had “some college.” And (93.1%) had also attained an education beyond high school with 12 (41.4%) having earned a “college degree or more”, and 11 (37.1%) had in the U.S. with higher levels of education when compared to the fathers; 13 (36.8%) more of the participants mothers had college degrees or levels of education than the Ukrainian parents; nearly twice as many Russian parents arrived with “college degrees or more”, and of the Russian who had attained this level of education. Despite these educational credentials, most of the parents were not able to utilize the degrees in the United States and took lower status jobs compared to the jobs they held in their first country. Of the 61 parents, 35 (57.3%) took lower status jobs, and of those 20 were mothers (32.8%) and 15 were Fathers (24.6%). Even though mothers as a group were more highly educated than fathers at the time of arrival they were not able to translate their educational advantage in the U.S. context.

In terms of the current socio-economic status of the participants reported their family income ( $N=31$ ) twice as many Russian participants compared to Ukrainian participants reported that their household income was \$50,001-60,000 or more [Russian:  $N=12$ , 38.7%; Ukrainian:  $N=6$ , 19.4%]. However, the income range for both Russian and Ukrainian groups is from \$10,001-20,000 to \$110,001-120,000, and more than half of the participants reporting income ( $N=18$ ; 58.1%) related that their family household income ranges between \$50,001 - \$ 60 , 0 0 0 . The participants 8.2% of the U.S. household income population in 2007 that fell within the range of \$50,000-\$74,999 with the median income for that

year being \$50,233 (U.S. Census Bureau). However, the average household income for Russian students is \$67,778 in comparison to \$53,462 for the Ukrainian students. Thus we can conclude that the Russian parents are notably higher than U.S. average income levels while the Ukrainians are close to U.S. averages.

### **Survey Domains**

The semi-structured interview guide contained questions that were selected to elicit student responses on specific domains of relevance for this qualitative study. Short answer, close-ended and open-ended questions were constructed for each area. In addition to demographic and background socio-economic information, questions targeting their emotional memories of the transitional experiences from the country of origin to U.S. society, socialization on the university campus, identity formation, sibling perspectives, parental perspectives, their roles within their family context, and their cultural assessments about the respective national contexts were included.

The open ended questions facilitated their nuanced representations of childhood migration and transitional experiences in the U.S. context as they related to their sense of adaptation, assimilation and self-identification. Additionally, the open format of some questions also aided the exploration of how the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant youth coped emotionally during their childhood cultural and linguistic transition and how these transitions in particular may have influenced their adaptation and subsequent identities. Some of the participants confirmed during the interviews the importance through the national and cultural transitions. While some had relatively unproblematic transitions, most of the participants in this study encountered notable challenges related to the

disruption during childhood. Some expressed that the interview process itself was helpful to them especially when there had been traumatic experiences related to leaving their first country and/or transition in the U.S. Others stated that the interview was the first time that they had actually reflected on the emotional impact of that phase of their life, and in some instances pointed out that the discussion brought back the feelings they had during that time in their childhood. Typically, the participants expressed that it was surprising to them that there was an interest in the experiences of immigrant children generally and those coming from Eastern Europe in particular. At the conclusion of the interview, most of the participants offered their perspectives and recommendations in how immigrant youth could be assisted based on their own experiences. Also, every participant pointed out that they enjoyed participating in the interview and that the study was important and/or needed.

All of the interviews with the 34 Russian and Ukrainian college students were conducted in 2009, and the interviews were personally transcribed in preparation for the analysis of the data.

### **Generalizability**

Given the small, non-representational nature of the sample for this project, the findings cannot be generalized to the broader population of Eastern European immigrant students living in the U.S. However, as a qualitative study, it was designed to explore the under researched question about the perceived legacy of early childhood transitions on young adult immigrants. The themes uncovered with this more limited study can be pursued in the future with larger or more representative studies. The insights gained through this investigation may stimulate further

inquiry on identity formation and adaptation trajectories of Eastern European college students who arrived in the U.S. during their childhood.

### **Reflective Methodological Comments**

During the interviews with the Russian and Ukrainian students, I was cognizant of several aspects of the qualitative research process. Among the strengths of qualitative research is the ability to identify nuance and complexities in the human experience that otherwise may not be known. The informal open-ended questionnaire was designed to facilitate a dialogue between myself and the student where we would collaborate on each question on an equal level.

O b s e r v a t i o n s o f t h e p a r t i c i p a n t s d e m e a n o r d u  
served to contextualize the emotional aspect of their stories. After each interview I reviewed the guide and added notations where the participants may have asked for further clarification and/or had a suggestion about the interview process. These interactions were taken into account for the next scheduled interview thereby strengthening the process. However, while additional prompts were included where it seemed useful the initial questions were never altered in order to maintain the integrity of the research process. Overall, the organization of the interview guide easily facilitated moving from topic to topic in a natural manner that created a collaborative discussion which was key to this inquiry. Building rapport with the participant within a short period of time was essential in order to maximize the quality of the interaction, and I believe that occurred based on my observations as well as their comments about the interview experience.

Interviewer characteristics must also be considered in the qualitative research design. When the participants can identify in some way with the interviewer, it may enhance the rapport between them. Although we were strangers when we met and of a different generation, we had

t h e c o m m o n a l i t y o f r o l e a s “ s t u d e n t ” a n d m u t u  
 students expressed that they decided to participate since they wanted to *help* me with my *project*.  
 And from my opening statement, the participants knew that I am of German ancestry, Caucasian,  
 and that I emigrated during childhood with my family after WWII to the U.S.

All of the immigrant students were of Eastern European heritage, and most often  
 i d e n t i f i e d r a c i a l l y a s “ w h i t e , ” b u t t h e r e w a s  
 affiliation within the Russian and Ukrainian students. Although there was commonality between  
 most of the respondents and myself in terms of childhood immigrant status, European heritage,  
 and race, the well-known history of Nazi Germany could potentially have been a limitation in the  
 collaborative interview process especially if their families had been subjected to the atrocities  
 t h a t o c c u r r e d d u r i n g t h e W W I I e r a . F r o m t h e s t u d e n t s  
 standpoint about historical transgressions by different national, racial or ethnic groups in general,  
 my German heritage did not seem to be an impediment in the interview process.

There were both female and male participants among the 34 Russian and Ukrainian  
 interviewees. Whether or not the students would be more comfortable with same or opposite  
 gender individuals and/or younger or older people cannot be known. Being a female of middle  
 age could have served as a strength or weakness during the interaction with the participants.  
 There were times that I sensed it was a strength given the openness of both female and male  
 students when relating sensitive and emotional accounts of their experiences.

Prior to the recording of the interview each participant was offered the opportunity to ask  
 any questions that they may have had about the research project, and given the assurance that  
 they could end the interview at any time should they choose to do so. I noted that most of the

students found that their participation in the study also afforded them an opportunity to talk about their experiences of migration and transition in their youth that they had not addressed before. However, as the interviewer I was challenged with managing the questions within a reasonable time frame without—especially when sensitive information was being shared. Coupling my sociological training with the experience of having worked with youth in various capacities within the social services field I believe prepared me for a range of student reactions. And when the immigrant students either expressed that remembering their experiences upset them and/or were visibly upset, I immediately interrupted the interview and asked if they would prefer not to continue with the discussion. In each of those instances, they elected to continue and at times they expressed it was helpful to them to talk about their recollections.

It is also critical when being engaged in qualitative research that the participants know what your research interests are without leading the interviewee. My opening statement divulged that my research interest in the experiences of immigrant children in part stemmed from my own personal experience of coming from Germany to the U.S. when I was eight years old. When the students inquired if I had conducted research before about migrant children, I related that I had explored the transitional experiences of immigrant youth for my MA thesis (Seeger-diNovi, 1996). The insights that I gained from the prior investigation stimulated additional questions that led to the current exploratory study. However, I did not at any time divulge my findings nor speculate on any potential outcome of this exploration. Maintaining objectivity was foremost for me during the interviews, and at the same time it is acknowledged that an element of subjectivity exists in research since the investigator is part of the process at each stage of the investigation.

### CHAPTER 3

#### RECOLLECTIONS OF CHILDHOOD IN THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

*As far as neighborhood structure it just felt just much more open ah you were more free to be outside and to run around and be little kids playing in the mud...We have in every yard that goes along with the big apartment buildings there is always a sandbox...Just the whole point that there was so much more for May because ah the chestnuts start blooming in May...(Adleta, 11, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).*

*K now if it is because of my cultural [Jewish] background or what...I remember in fact clear n v j g t g { q w p i g t " m k f u " c p f " K " l w u v " p g x g t " t g c n n { " i v j g t g { y j g p " K " y c u " k p " e j k n f " e c t g í y j c v " v j g { " y j g t g " K " y g p " u r c e g 0 0 0 K v ø u " v t g g u " g x g t { y j g t g 0 " " K v " k u } " y g n e q o g f " c p { " y j g t g " K " y g p } " y j g t g ø u " c n o q u v " r t k o q t f k c n " d t w v c n k v { " c d q w v " remember about Russia... (eProv; 5, Age at arrival; Male, Russian).*

The literature review in Chapter One indicates that research on the experiences and outcomes of the foreign born children has been limited, and that ambiguity of their immigrant status has hindered important investigations critical to understanding their integration.

Disagreement exists on the construction of research categories for immigrant children and

concomitantly what constitutes a “first” generation immigrants since they have been considered first generation immigrants since they have been exposed to the culture and language of their country of origin nearly as long as adults have. The imprinting of culture and the associated memories of that time period is anticipated to be an enduring influence on their lives. According to this rationale, it is generally anticipated that young immigrant children are either minimally impacted by their life in the country of origin or not at all, and, therefore, are typically viewed as being similar to native-born children. However, the participants in this study identified themselves unequivocally as immigrants indicating that their self-perceptions have

been shaped to a certain extent by their migration experiences. Although questions remain about what young immigrant children have experienced and what they recall from their life in their country of origin most often assumptions have been made when constructing research methodologies that investigate immigrant children. This issue has been discussed in the literature review in Chapter One, and this issue has been addressed formally and informally at professional meetings by academics. When investigating the phenomenon of the immigrants use the criteria of memory of experience in the children's life in the first country to compare that young immigrant children living with at least one immigrant parent are influenced more by their language and that if they have any memories of their country of origin they would be secondary influences of children's memory aids in the selection of i.e., those children considered to not have memories of their early experiences in their first country are not included with the immigrant children. For this reason it is critical to acquire more information about the decisions of their country of origin and migration experiences through their own narratives since there is not consensus about their immigrant status. This issue becomes more complex since human memory processes and children's memory is discussed as the following discussion indicates. also

There is an ongoing debate on what memory is and how it is processed within social, cultural, technological, literary, artistic, biological and cognitive fields as well as how the brain itself functions in the retrieval of memories (Brockmeier, 2010:5). Research continues to focus on autobiographical memory in terms of its reliability of storing and recovering events accurately

(Howe, 2000), and levels of processing related to the past, present and future (Berntsen and Bohn, 2010). Through narratives human beings may create their life story through a

c o n c e p t u a l i z a t i o n o f a “ d e v e l o p m e n t a l s c r i p t  
o n e s r e m e m b e r e d p a s t , e x p e e r ” i . e . ( W e i l d t , p r e e t s e a n l t . , 2 a 0

Researchers in the field of neuropsychiatry are engaged in a vigorous debate over the standard model of memory consolidation and they provide alternative models for the function of the human brain (Moscovitch, 2010; Baddeley, 2010). Additionally, there are different perspectives on whether there is one memory system or dual memory systems, and some have found support through experimental research of the dual-retrieval model (Brainerd and Reyna, 2010).

However, Howe (2000) has argued that a single memory system is sufficient that could accommodate memories formed in early childhood through adulthood.

...A s n e w d o m a i n s o f k n o w l e d g e a r e a c q u i r e d ,  
organized as cohesive and dynamic structures, ones that not only gain in longevity  
but also serve to beget new memories from subsequent experiences. It is this self-  
organizing principle of memory that researchers need to understand better, a  
p r i n c i p l e t h a t s e r v e s m e m o r y - x v i i i . o m i t s v e r y

Childhood memories are contested in terms of legitimacy; that is, the question exists as to whether children can be reliable sources for recalling events from the past. Childhood developmental theorists have been interested in the organization of memories since they are inextricably linked to the acquisition of language. Memories for children are shaped through the conversations with others, and they acquire language categories through socialization and discourse in home and school (Nelson in Handel, et al, 2007:94).

...W h e n c h i l d r e n o f 2 t o 3 h a v e a c q u i r e d e n o  
to work in ways similar to those of older children and adults, although they do not

become interested in talking about past experiences until about age 4... (Nelson in Handel, et al, 2007:94).

All of the participants in this study were at least age five by the time they arrived in the U.S. and, therefore, fit the description by Nelson of having acquired language and memory aptitude in their first country. Nonetheless, some hold that children ages five and younger; i.e. pre-school children, do not have any memories and their adaptation reflects most closely the native-born American children (Rumbaut in Portes and DeWind, 2007:349). In contrast, the narratives of some of the participants in this study who arrived at age five provided descriptions of their way of life in their country of origin. (These narratives will be included later herein). Moreover, from the field of psychology we learn that ages two through ten are significant in understanding storing and recalling childhood memories.

... It is well documented that childhood memory onset of the self... the onset of the cognitive autobiographical memory, setting the lower limit for such memories at around 2 years of age... The following question remain memories of childhood become more numerous across the early years in childhood (2-3 years of age to 8-10 years of age)? What the evidence shows is that throughout childhood the ability to maintain information in storage increases, not only in autobiographical memory, but a (2002:97).

Recently researchers, Valerie Reyna and Chuck Brainerd from Cornell University, found that "... children depend more heavily on a part happened while adults depend more on another what happened ... as a sceptible to false memories which can be more extremely problematic for court cases..." (Dere children were able to distinguish between "ex (Krackow, 2010), and distinctions in the mediation of autobiographical narratives have been

found in cross-cultural comparisons of pre-school children (Chasiotis, et al, 2010). These findings counter the tendency to trivialize c have advocated for the inclusion of children s per policy formulations.

Based on the current research regarding memory it is not possible to establish with certainty if each part of a childhood event or if it is a n constructed relational narrative of current, past, and future elements in their lives. There were also different viewpoints expressed periodically by the Russian and Ukrainian students about childhood memories with most being certain that their accounts are factual recollections of their actual experiences. However, some said that they had few memories of certain aspects of their way of life in the country of origin and the migration to the U.S., and that what they knew came mostly from their parents. To illustrate, Kalia expressed that she did not trust her own memory prior to age seven, and yet later she provided detailed descriptions that came from her experience. And Biata who was seven and believed her childhood was “severed” due emigration said “...In my mind I go back and for Valerik who was five years old when he departed Russia explained that his memories have become “blurred” as a r at he has seen in movies since changes o emigration. In contrast, Petrov, who emigrated at age five, described images from the past that come to him like “almost a ripped up painting image.

It was urban. Well as urban for Russia. It isn't like in a high rise. It was like a big apartme lived like my room was blue but I guess th was like a sky blue actually. It was one of the best things that I remember...to see

my grandfather who would peek in the door and stuck his tongue at me just kind of funny like an affectionate thing. He w... Yeah well that's things I'd good say about it. Well ah Il the good remember between the kindergarten and our wood and forest. So I guess it wasn't com been to Volgograd in a that I remember in had as since I c lot of gravel a lot of rock and kind of li comfortable to walk on. I remember we di remember that and there s this big giant s mean as far as culture goes it still was the Soviet Union!...I remember my kindergarten. It was ah like a bleak wooden house ah I remember what else? There s bits and pieces like not a cohesive painting . . . the age I h m r.t. (P é n g o v o p u t A g e a t a r Russian).

Regardless of the degree of detail or accuracy in their narratives, the process that they employed to recall childhood memories from their country of origin, or the meanings they attach to those recollections, they are valuable in understanding their experience as child migrants especially since they were recounted with conviction. Their constructed narratives on the selected dimensions provide snapshots of their way of life in their first country, and these recollections may inform their perspectives throughout their lives. Educators who assist young immigrant children have observed that the culture, language and remembered way of life in their country of birth are meaningful to them (Igoa, 1995). Furthermore, proponents of embodiment theories provide evidence that human beings can experience the emotions felt related to a past event by thinking of it (Niedenthal et al in Smith-Lovin and Winkielman, 2010). According to this perspective, when the child migrants recall or construct emotionally charged scenes and/or experiences from their past it could evoke a range of emotions. Within the particip narratives about their way of life, family and friends in their countries of origin their responses ranged from nostalgia linked to positive recollections and regrets about negative occurrences. When the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students were asked what the greatest influences

were on the persons they have become 67.6 percent expressed that living in their country of origin as being one of the major factors. Consequently, recalled feelings about their childhood in the former Soviet Republics could potentially impact them during the acculturation in the U.S. context. (Further discussion on other influences on the students' emotions included in the final three chapters.)

Since the question of whether to combine the information gathered on the experiences of foreign-born children with those of native-born children is often contingent on children's capacity to remember their experiences in their country of origin, the focus of this chapter and the following chapter will be on the nature of childhoods prior to their departure to the U.S. A concerted effort has been made that the accounts selected to illustrate their way of life in Eastern Europe represent a range of the participants' ages at the time of departure so that the degree children are imprinted with their first culture and language. Perspectives on this issue guide the construction of research methodologies concerning immigrant children.

The participants' narratives may be reflected in the fact that memories are often disrupted at the time of emigration; that is, what may have been pertinent to an older child who is of middle school age may be different to a child who has begun elementary school. Therefore, there are variations within age cohorts when considering content of their descriptions of spaces or experiences that they recall. Also, their recollections indicate that there are differences in the details provided when considering their age at migration. Those participants who were older tended to describe their memories of their first country with more contextual information but that was not always the case. At times students who arrived in early adolescence responded that they

did not have any recollection on certain topics and those who were younger provided lengthy descriptions. Certain variations within age groups in the contextualization of their narratives may be accounted for by individual differences in maturity rather than fixed developmental stages (Taylor, Tapp, and Henaghan, 2007).

### **K o o k i t c p v " E j e c t i o n s f r o m t h e i r C o u n t r y o f O r i g i n**

The participants were socialized for varying lengths of time when they were children in different Eastern European geographical spaces during the post-Communist era. Russian student participants lived in such cities as Kazan, Moscow, Norilsk, Omst, Pyatigorsk, Rostov, St. Petersburg, and Volgograd. A few Russian-identified participants came from the former Soviet Republics of Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan. And the Ukrainian students hailed from such places as Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkov, Kiev, Konotop, Kremenchuk, Lviv, Odessa, and Zhytomyr. When the participants emigrated to the U.S. in the years 1991 through 2003, they were five through fourteen years old. Therefore, they have experienced the cultural and political environment of the post-Communist era to varying extents in their communities, neighborhoods, and schools. Although nationalism in Ukraine was on the rise after its independence from Russia, the participants reported that their first language was Russian with the exception of three Ukrainian students who had been taught Ukrainian.

Overall, their accounts demonstrate a wide spectrum of diverse experiences during their primary socialization that seem reflective of the political climate in their country of origin, family connections, religious and secular celebrations, nature of childhood activities, school experience, expectation of children, language usage, types of interaction with neighbors, racial and ethnic attitudes held by neighbors, teachers and peers. Although children are influenced by

close family members and through the recounting of family histories, the child migrants from Eastern Europe who participated in this study were encouraged to focus primarily on their own recollections.

### *Memories of Childhood Neighborhoods in Eastern Europe*

The Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students predominantly were socialized in urban spaces within the former Soviet Union. Although they come from different geographical regions with their own subcultures, economies, political forces, and community dynamics which conditioned their living circumstances two thirds of the participants generally viewed their neighborhoods in a positive light. However, seven participants who lived in the Eastern European cities included negative and/or neutral descriptions of their surroundings prior to emigration in Eastern Europe.

### U r b a n H e a l t h y S p a c e s f o r C h i l d r e n s P l a y

The narratives of the college-age students who emigrated during childhood at young ages frequently included detailed descriptions of their urban neighborhood which typically consisted of high rise apartment buildings that were structured to form a communal space where the children could play. These living and play spaces often seem to be vividly imprinted in the participants minds. For example, Dima, who sketched her apartment building, architectural details, and play area during the interview. It was apparent that she still had emotional attachments for the home that she had shared with her family, and for the communal life that she had enjoyed as a child despite the fact that her acculturation had begun a number of years ago.

The building where I lived looks like a letter in Russian. Ah it looks like the letter g...And in mine there is one, two, three, fo

all separate. Like in one you go in one entrance and there is like five floors ah there s actually four floors s a p o l o g w o z e i three like four ah apartments ah condos on looked. [Respondent sketched a diagram on paper.] Here is the building, and there are one, two, three these are the entrances. And we lived in this one right here in the corner so you would go to the steps to the third we lived on the third floor and our balcony faced here. And right here was the playground! This is where all the kids... here and over here we all went to pla entrances and circled her own that led to her apartment on the third floor. The structure of the building looked similar to a corner shape that created a court yard for the communal playground that children had direct access to from their entrances.] like here I remember there was a field and it here we would play soccer. Moms would come out and hang their like laundry. It was like communal living... (Dimas; 8, Age

Other participants from both Ukraine and Russia emphasized the healthy life styles for children in their first countries who played outside for extended periods of time during each day. Not only did the participants convey the healthy way of living in their countries of origin, but play spaces also signified for them that children s specific needs wer plan for communal living. In some cases the students provided contrasts of play spaces from their countries of origin and the lack of safe areas for children in their first neighborhoods within the U.S. context. Their responses to these differences during their integration will be addressed further within Chapter Five.

How we have it in my country is that it's really important to have a place for children to play unlike here if you notice there's not that ma think there were like three-floor buildings and they would be in a circle and the middle would be a playground...so every time you would go from one circle of houses to another there would be a playground. So like I could see different playgrounds in an hour... (Andreea; 9, Age at arrival; Female, Russia.)

The things that really stand out in my memory ah hanging out with my friends and playing soccer in the bortn which is li buildings are set up in Russia—it s a rectangle, and in the the kids play... In all cities it s like that

And ah it was you know an urban community and I would play in the yard by my high rise apartment building and it was a row lived in one of them... and they were basicall of like one building but there were five separate entrances. And they were facing the courtyard and behind it was ah a little playground. (Male, Ukraine).

There were also narratives that distinctly childhood that was marked by the ideology of the restrictive post-Communist era. A prominent recollection for Markov was the visits to the the details of the city's political uniqueness narrative illustrates how in creating information is memories acquired over time, but that also is a process relevant to adult memories.

And I remember when I was a kid we would go like to the center like the central area like center city like the main area of our city...Dnipropetrovsk is like one of the bigger cities in Ukraine...people don't totally closed city...So no one outside of it because we had ah one of the biggest ah like manufacturing plants for ah motors and they built motors for tanks... So if you wanted to visit you in Ukraine they could not come into your city. You would have to leave your city and go to Kiev to the capital which was an open city and visit the main Kiyv. People in the West who city... (Markov; 6, Age at arrival; Male, Ukr

Interestingly, although Markov has lived in the U.S. for 14 years he as well as other participants still took ownership of their cities or countries of origin. Typically they refer to these geographical concepts "my d'ia y' n g r t h a t children may be part of their self-identification, and it also suggests that children may retain a degree of attachment for their first cultural home.

## Urban Unhealthy Characteristics in Children's

Although comparatively few of the participants included negative descriptions of their physical neighborhoods in Russia and Ukraine, the seven participants who described their childhood environments as spaces that included urban blight, drug paraphernalia and public drinking were understandably less nostalgic about their first communities. Federova, who was eight years old when she left Ukraine, stated that she knew most of her neighbors in the

apartment building, and play area where she had never had the presence of drug addicts and that "...you were those people and do not pick up those needles or anything like that ..."

young when he departed Ukraine (age six), he was eager to describe every aspect of his unwholesome play area as he remembered it. A segment of his account follows:

It wasn't nice at all like a jungle gym kind of thing not a like maybe huge thing but like a little one where you could climb and sit on it and stuff like that...but next to it was a pile of broken basement, and the windows of the basement came up to like ground level...and the windows were always broken and so we always had a lot of stray cats, rats, mice and other like creatures like living in the basement and they would go in and out and stuff...The stray cats would violently hear them screeching and stuff. They would always scratch each other and whenever I saw a rat maybe it was because I was small it seemed really big but I swear to God it was like this long [approx scaled down because everything was bigger because I was little...(Markov; 6, Age at arrival; Male, Ukraine).

Children who recall negative aspects of their first homes and neighborhoods are more than likely to not have a positive emotional connection of these spaces during their adjustment period within their new homes in the U.S. neighborhoods.

## Rural and Suburban Children's Neighborhoods

A few of child migrants from Eastern Europe described idyllic suburban and rural spaces where children could safely wander good distances from home to play and pick fruit from trees.

Their narratives reflect different ways of life and also what is meaningful to them in retrospect.

All the kids learned how to climb trees. bit and I remember just like picking out just fresh from really different country and I know it was a really different garden. I had no idea where I was going and yet I knew I was going to my family all of these apples and all of these ah apricots and what else oh cherries and they would say where did you take these the lady knew me so she and so it wasn't that I don't know maybe twenty years ago but it was like a good pick the hill experience... (Eva; 10, Age at arrival; Female)

In contrast to Eva's account is Lena's description of a window in the suburbs that would not draw her back to that space after emigration.

Yeah a river by the Black Sea sounds pretty nice from a large parking garage where people used it for like storage and their cars and after that there was a garbage dump and after that was ah the largest cemetery in the world and that is how it was explained to me. the window of our apartment you know garages, garbage, the cemetery...(Lena; 12, Age at arrival; Female, Russian).

Galina described her early childhood experiences and socialization patterns reflective of living in the extreme environment of Siberia, Russia until the family moved permanently to their summer apartment in St. Petersburg. Her narrative of her childhood illustrates another difference in socialization based on the geography within the former vast Soviet Union, but it also includes memories of when she was five years old.

That is where we actually lived and the biggest city next to it was Norilsk where I was born and we lived there until I was five and it was always snowing. And the only month that it wasn't snowing was in the summer. It was really cold and I remember going to kindergarten there and there was a time when there was a pipe that burst in our apartment and it was about two months and it was like negative 40 degrees Celsius outside at that time

and so all the kids were put in the kinder like a month... (Galina; 10, Age at arrival;

Since both immigrant children and Eastern Europeans have been conflated by researchers in broad categories, for the purpose of comparison a few students were included who were Russian-identified but emigrated from other former Soviet Republics. From the descriptions by the participants that came from Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan they lived in neighborhoods and observed cultural practices that were different from those that reigned from Russia and Ukraine. Although the child migrants shared the experience of the dominant Russian language and culture in the post-Communist era, the former Soviet republics were differentiated in terms of population composition, traditions, linguistic practices, and degree of nationalism. These distinctions will be highlighted in the following subsections and chapters. To illustrate, Eleni's scene in her Uzbekistan neighborhood that she attributed to the influences of the ethnic Uzbeks. She found the environment intriguing and details some of the conventions that she had observed as a child.

Well there weren't any apartment buildings different! Across the street there was a bazaar which is like an open super market...and there were so many people there outside like fresh bread, fish, fruit. You had to carry your own ah scale to weigh the meat...because...the people who sell the less meat [laughter]...my Mom would carry her own scale and she would like get into arguments with ah the people who would try to sell her meat. It was just such a big deal and stuff like that... (Eleni; 8, age of arrival; Female, Uzbekistan).

In comparison to Eleni's narrative of place discussed how her reality of place was shaped by the Russian media while growing up, and consequently it became a key element in her self-identification as a Russian during her childhood in the former Soviet Republic.

I can say ah Tashkent is the Capital of Uzbekistan ah a lot of Russian astronauts lived there...but when I was growing up I me didn't even know that I was in Uzbekistan... Russian).

Their accounts are examples of how the distinctive immediate surroundings and/or dominant political influences via media could impact formation. Whereas Eleni was socialized within a context that reflected the Uzbek way of life along with the Russian influences, Calina was submerged in the dominant Russian culture to such an extent that she was surprised at the time of emigration that she was not actually leaving Russia.

#### Idyllic Childhoods Within Post-Soviet Transformational Spaces

The following narratives illustrate further variation in the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant -migration lifestyles. Some of the descriptions reflect differences in the family-economic status prior to emigration and most who had comfortable lives later in the U.S. initially contended with reduced statuses. A few of the participants described particularly idyllic childhoods where their days were pleasant and where they were insulated from the circumstances that led their parents to emigrate.

Ah my memories are good. Tagdurog is a small port city on the sea by the sea so... It was a very attractive place to grow good...(Grigor; 14, Age at arrival; Male, Russian).

I lived right in the center city in Moscow Kremlin and all that...we would take the subway and in there...(Sergei; 9, Age of arrival; Male, Ru

In addition to their primary homes one third of the 34 participants talked about the dachas their families had; that is, summer homes where they spent enjoyable times with their families and friends. Lena's family bought a dacha by

Black Sea. However, in most cases the dachas served the purpose of gardening during the warm summer days in order to can vegetables and fruits for the harsh winter months.

My grandma and grandpa kept vegetable gardens and berries and strawberries you name it. And also my grandma also had flowers and then I had a lot of friends too you know who lived there... (Ilina; 9, Age at arrival; Female, Russia)

Making your own food provisions was essential for most of the participants during the years in post-communist Eastern Europe, but it also was a place for seasonal socialization with children who lived near the dacha.

#### Beauty of Country but Shortages, Theft and Food Lines

Cultural, economic, health and legal contrasts between their first country and the U.S. are drawn in Eastern European students narrative pleasant and stressful aspects in their childhood may produce conflicts in sentiments about the first culture in comparison with life in the Ukraine with aesthetic green spaces close by, and home gardens for fresh fruits and vegetables, but also where theft was common and convictions rare or nonexistent. His narrative not only reflects the duality of recalled experiences in his first country when he was a child, he also makes comparisons of his observations from the past with observations he has made in the U.S. of differences in life styles.

Where I lived in Ukraine there were many noises ah many people who in Eastern Europe drink alcohol and just take strolls out on the streets maybe there are benches where people sit feed the pigeons talk about life free and more unrestrained from the fast f this kind of ah speedy life in America where you have to go to work earn money support the ah the big bills...So yes in Ukraine it s a very differ You would hang clothes to ah to hang outside of your home on the outside as to next to trees and everything and it would get stolen by the people to resell it by the people just to buy food maybe for themse l v e s ... i t w a s m o r e l i k e i f t h e n i t s s t o l e n [ l a u g h t e r ] b e c a u s e a h y o u

person might not even have an occupation status. He might not have a social status that much the person that stole might have been a thief or might be a regular person that is hiding I don't know thing. If it's stolen, then it's stolen...

Participants also recounted memories of clothing and food shortages, and strategies the families employed for survival in the post-Communist era. While these experiences were not common to most of the participants in this study, for those who knew first-hand about the shortages their recollections of events were still vivid. Within their narratives the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students describe their obtain basic needs, and coupled with having shared the ensuing immigrant struggle in the U.S. sets these foreign-born children apart from the native-born children of immigrants in significant ways.

There you have to stand from like 5 in the morning to get a pair of shoes and or even to buy eggs or bread or whatever milk or whatever it is that you needed you have to stand in line to get it... I remember my early in the morning and he would go wait Mom would bring my brother and me and the four of us would stand there to get food because they would give like for instance a dozen of eggs for a pair of pants so that meant for me and my brother that although we were little we would still be able to get eggs... (Dima; 8, Age at arrival;

Other children made observations of poverty during the economic transformation in Russia that did not personally impact them but nonetheless made indelible impressions upon them. Such is the case for Adrik who was six in 1995 when he departed Moscow for the U.S.

Well, I remember going to ah my neighborhood park a lot. And I remember there used be a lot of beggars that used to eat was Moscow!...(Adrik; 6, Age at arrival; Male; Russian).

Experiencing food shortages in of others, remain so, the powerful memory that influences their perspectives as adults. Not only does it serve as a central

rationale for emigration to the U.S. but it remains a point of reference in their assessment of life in their new country and the life circumstances of others.

***Neighborhood Compositions: Racially Homogeneous***

The narratives by the students of the ethnic/racial compositions of their neighbors in their former countries at times included simple descriptions of their ethnic characteristics, but other narratives included explanations for the essentially homogeneous ethnic neighborhoods.

Another pattern that emerged was the unifying influence of the Russian culture and language connected with the ideology of solidarity associated with communism. The most nuanced account on this dimension was provided by Grigor who had completed eight years of education in Russia prior to migration. However, there was overall considerable variation with respect to

depth and nuance of descriptions when considering their age at departure. (see

The Russian participants reported that the “white” or “Slavic.”

Ah I would say they were all they were Russian (arrival; Male, Russia).

Our neighborhood was very homogeneous. It was Russians—only Russians... (Luka; 12, age of arrival; Male,

Everyone was Russian. I don't remember any (10, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

Students from Ukraine described their neighbors as “Ukrainian and Russian,” and “Jewish.” Typical emphasis on ~~under Communism~~ where all were to be considered Russian.

I guess we were all Slavic in the population... I think are now asking are you Russian or Ukrainian or are you this or are you that? ...We were all Russian [laughter]... (Akim; 9

Changes in borders after the collapse of the Soviet Union shifted national boundaries, but as Grigor explains his neighbors were still racially white and ethnically Russian and who communicated through the unifying Russian language.

I guess they were ah racially or white or ah ethnic race they were Russian really. Well see we were at the border of Ukraine and Russia so I guess there were ah there were a good number of Ukrainians living in our city. Of course when the dissolution of the Soviet Union happened like you were on this side of the border and all of a sudden you're here... and we're distinction because we all spoke the same language so you know no ah ethnic differences... (Grigor; 14, Age at arrival;

According to the participants' accounts they never or on people of color in their first neighborhood. Jelena, who was eight when she moved from Russia to the U.S., recounted that an exchange student from Africa lived next door to her and that this was an unusual circumstance. Although racial diversity did not exist in their first communities in Eastern Europe, differentiations between Ukrainian, Russians, and Jewish people were made.

I would say that there were ah a lot of older people ah all white all Ukrainian ah not many religions different religions but pretty much the same. They were mostly Greek Orthodox and you could tell that because we were the only Jewish family in the whole complex...When the holidays Christian kids start ah caroling and you can tell right arrival; Female; Ukraine).

They were all white and Jewish...There were or Jewish, and Jewish sucks [laughter]...I had the idea where all Russians must be Communists you know. With solidarity you know you don't really ah make distinctions Russian...(Biata; 7, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

The distinctive ethnic histories of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan are reflected in the participants' descriptions of neighbors who were

Our neighbors were essentially were the Muslim but most of them were Russian... (Arman; Uzbekistan).

Umm in our neighborhood ah I would say there were predominantly Russian and they were white. There were Uzbeks... (Calin; Uzbekistan).

Return trips to the country of origin could blur the memories of experiences prior to emigration, but only a few of the participants have visited their country of birth since their emigration. One of those students is Andreea and her narrative regarding the ethnic and racial composition of people in her first country reflects her childhood memory, family history, and the observations she made during her return trip to Kazakhstan.

It's complicated... real Kazakhstani is don't mixed in with Mongolians. So right now the real Kazakhstani that you would see in my country is 70% Mongolian already. The blood is already like 70% Mongolian and 30% Kazakhstani. I mean I went to a museum and that is what they told me... and you know Russia all the Koreans got sent to my country... and that's why when country you would probably see a lot of like Asian looking people like really Asian and also darker skin... Ah as for real light skinned because they are like the real mountain people... I think great grandma was like a real one and she was very pale and she lived to be like a hundred...(Andreea; 9, Age at arrival; Female, Kazakhstan).

Andreea includes herself among the racially dominant group that represents the blend of Mongolian and Kazakhstani people, and elsewhere in the interview she adamantly rejects the notion of categorizing people by race.

The participants reactions to ethnic and transitional phase will be discussed in Chapters Five, but primarily their narratives reflected an acquired appreciation for diversity.

### *Attitudes of Neighbors*

Over half of the Eastern European college students who participated in this study reported that their neighbors in their country of origin were friendly toward them. When making comparisons by nationality on this dimension fourteen percent more Ukrainian students compared to Russian students had friendly neighbors. Close relationships were attributed to the vital networking with neighbors for survival that was typical in the post-Communist era in Eastern Europe, the strong friendship bonds formed in schools since children remained with the same group, and the cultural value of selflessness characteristic of neighbors in the country of origin. Nonetheless, over a third of the Russian and Ukrainian students talked about neighbors who were unfriendly, discriminatory and/or had limited or not any interaction with neighbors in their country of origin. Inculcation of congenial, hostile or neutral social interactions during childhood could potentially influence the next phase of social development for child migrants within the new cultural and linguistic context.

### Congenial Relationships with Neighbors

Generally, regardless of age or nationality, Eastern European narratives contained descriptions of congenial relationships with neighbors, but because they were children several discussed neighbors who

Ah I remember there used to be a few old ladies in my neighborhood—they were in no way related to my family—but they took care of me and my sister. My parents entrusted me with them. And my Dad would work all of the time, and my Mom was actually able to stay home with us. But whenever she was upstairs in the house she would not have any problem trusting these ladies to watch us when we were outside on the stairs...(Adrik; 6, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

I did have neighbors that would be babysitters all the time. And I remember my Mom saying because both of my parents were doctors there they were always

busy and somebody had to help like watch us all the time...(Andreea; 9, Age at arrival, Female, Russia).

Other participants constructed narratives about their relationships with neighbors that included descriptions of particular events. Eleni, a Russian-identified student, who was eight years old when she emigrated, described the social engagements hosted by their Uzbek neighbors that she and her parents attended and enjoyed. These memorable and interesting interactions with hospitable neighbors of different ethnic backgrounds stimulated an appreciation for diversity that continued within the multicultural U.S. society.

They were really good to my parents. Ah I just remember when they would hold dinners they would be on the floors. The table would be [low]. There would be pillows around the table and we would sit on pillows to dine with them. It just was really exotic... (Eleni; 8, Age at arrival)

Vadim, as several other students, recalled having extended family members as neighbors.

In those cases they recalled that the atmosphere was particularly congenial.

Ah there weren't any problems with our neighbors. I lived with my Mom and Dad on the 8th floor and my grandparents lived on the 3rd floor in the same building so that was really nice. (Vadim; 10, Male, Ukraine).

#### Limited Interaction and Not Any Interaction with Neighbors

Five of the participants stated that they remembered not having any interaction with neighbors or that it was limited; four of these child migrants came from Russia. The circumstances for lack of interaction varied, and most often it seemed to be the choice of the participants. In the case of Stefan and Lena, the circumstances in their recalled memories that serve to explain lack of interaction, but their narratives also provide insights of other dimensions of their lives that reflect instability and class differences, respectively.

I. What do you remember about your neighbors in Russia? R. Nothing. I was never my family was not really social...My mother and I always moved around. So, when I was in Russia since I guess...ah since second grade from second to seventh grade we moved to four different apartments...we were still in Zone A so the school stayed the same, but the apartment was different...(Stefan; 14, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

My parents friends weren't really our neighbors like a working-class neighborhood so for the kind of work they were doing my Mom was a pharmaceutical engineer and my Dad was an engineer so it was kind of unusual for them to be there...so my parents they knew from work and they don't make a lot of a very few friends... (Lena; 12, Age at arrival; Female, Russian).

Galina's narrative includes a distinction between the family moved to St. Petersburg. Whereas they did not know their neighbors in their St. Petersburg apartment the neighbors older family..." Relationships with neighbors can be seen in Biata's narrative of her comparison with her older sister. I don't have any links to friends back there was like real quiet and really calm kept to myself. I had friends. We played in groups. I know my sister had more of a connection to people there... (Biata; 7, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

Biata's perception as a child who did not connect readily with other children in her familiar context has implications for the nature of her social integration in a foreign culture. Further discussion of this topic will be included in Chapter Five.

### Overt Acts of Prejudice and Discrimination by Some Neighbors

Over a third of the Eastern European respondents stated that they were either Jewish by heritage and/or religion or that their parents or grandparents were Jewish. (The suppression of religion under the Soviet Union and how that religious practice will be addressed later herein.) Among the self-identified Jewish participants a

common theme emerged of experiences they and/or their parents and grandparents had with anti-Semitism in their neighborhoods, communities and schools. In a few cases the participants describe how they and their families contended with blatant anti-Semitism which became the central reason for emigration. At times the students became emotional when recounting their memories and others talked about their philosophy and/or strategies to cope with prejudice and discrimination. Based on when the respondents and parents in their families lived where there was a sizeable Jewish population they did not encounter the discrimination compared to those students who were a numerical and political minority in their communities. The contrasting narratives by Federova and Adleta illustrate the starkly different experiences within their communities in Ukraine. Whereas Federova and her family lived in a Jewish enclave Adleta and her family resided in an apartment complex where they were a visible minority among ethnic Christian Ukrainians.

I don't remember anti-Semitism because I feel like in Odessa there are a lot of Jewish people... a lot of people there, and I feel that walls make me think there was anti-Semitism in Odessa...(Federova; 9, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

I don't know what would be the words to describe having like Nazi signs on our doors in like permanent marker, and we lived in this large complex and we had a stair it was an elevator. You basically have to go from floor one to floor five taking the stairs. So as you would walk up the stairs they would have all of these writings that would lead only to the second floor which was disturbing for my Mom. She was always washing the walls always trying to wash it off but after a while I think we even repainted the actual hall once which you know which you don't get reimbursed for that but on the wall so. And we knew exactly who it was who did it and they expressed their dislikes... the last home where we live families that were Jewish, but they were not open Jewish like they would see us like I went to a Jewish school and you could tell because I was always wearing a

long skirt and my elbows were covered... And minority to be looked down on...(Adleta; 11, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

When Eva recounted her role at age ten in the application process for permanent residency status she became upset, but she wanted to continue to share her memories.

So we lived in a in a kind of a residence where you know people would go outside and they where like you are Jewish. You a even belong here. And I heard that... and th I shouldn't cry because I sh ~~that. I~~ be strong and I don't want to you know cry but I jus Female, Ukraine).

Changing Jewish names to Russian names to protect against discrimination was a pattern that emerged in the st ut ~~reflects this practice, but he also talk~~ s. Ak about the benefit of protection he had from h a “Cossack.”

R. In that part of Ukraine we were pretty were friendly with most people or at least some of the people. Ah my grandfather was also Jewish and so he had his own bouts with anti-Semitism in Russia and Ukraine. My mother had to change her last at all? R. Me no because I got the Russian side s last name. So, bonus... I don't even look Jewish and... I do have the features of a Cossack so I don't helped...(Akim; 9, Age at arrival; Male, Ukr

Being of a religious minority among those who historically have had contentious relationships had created strain among neighb as another example that children from the various former Soviet Republics may have been socialized differently.

Our neighbors t ~~Islamism sort of came from~~ y. Our here anti neighbors were essentially were the Muslims...but I mean they were Islam ah Muslim but most of them were Russian but because you know although the Soviet Union broke up the attitudes were still there...(Uzbekistan).

The students who had experienced rejection or discrimination in their first countries were hopeful in finding acceptance and equality in the U.S. Some of the participants found that to be the case, and others contended with different forms of rejection and isolation during the period of acculturation. Assessment of these patterns within the discussed in Chapter Five that is concerned with their integration in the first U.S. schools and neighborhoods.

### *Memories of Close Family Ties in the First Country*

All of the Ukrainian students expressed that they had family members living nearby, and not any of them had experienced loss in their immediate family through death or divorce. In contrast, over a third of the Russian participants reported disruption in their nuclear families due to divorce or death. At the same time two thirds of the Russian students also stated that they lived near family members.

A common experience for the Russian and Ukrainian participants was the close relationship they formed with their grandparents who in many cases were considered just like “parents.” And in some instances their grandparents students since they nurtured them during their childhood. For example, Akim explained that his mother was widowed at a young age, and that she spent much of her time working and pursuing rabbinical studies.

You know I would go with my grandmother every Friday. We would take the train and then we would walk a mile or two—I don't remember what it was—to our summer house. And then we would do yard work, field work whatever and then Sunday night we would ride the train back to the city...and so I have an appreciation for what you have through hard work...(Akim; 9, Age at arrival; Male, Ukraine).

According to their accounts it is a cultural value for grandparents to be part of their lives on a regular basis and provide essential care regardless of socio-economic status, and some lived with their grandparents. The participants who described attachment for their grandparents felt a tremendous emotional loss when they left for the U.S., and when the grandparents also emigrated with them they benefited from emotional and pragmatic supports during the period of cultural and linguistic transitions. Further elaboration of extended family relationship will be given in Chapter Five.

### ***Memories of School Experiences in the First Country***

Educational experiences are particularly important to examine since children of school age spend much of their time in academic settings. Not only do schools serve as a forum for academic and social development for children, it is also where cultural values are transmitted and enacted. School systems typically strive to prepare youth for adulthood in order that they will assume functions within their society as loyal citizens. Through the narratives of the participants we can gain insights into their distinctive school experiences within the former Soviet Union and the nature of the educational stage that was disrupted at the time of emigration to the U.S.

### **Post Soviet Era Linguistic Practices**

Language serves more than the central function for communication; it also unifies people nationally and influences identity formation. The dominant language of Russian was instituted when the Soviet Union was formed and the existing national languages were either relegated to secondary status or eliminated. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the rebirth of republics a resurgence of interest in national languages occurred. Whether or not those events

impacted the respondents during the post-Communist era when they were children was contingent on factors such as the level of nationalism in their countries, the geographical proximity to Russia, and the dominant language within the school systems.

The Russian language was the primary language for most of the participants. Only three Ukrainian students related that Ukrainian was their first language. However, there were variations in linguistic practices in the home and school.

Yes my primary language was Russian although we lived in Ukraine ah but in first grade I had Russian8, Agnada arrival; Ukrainian pl Female, Ukraine).

Some changes in language usage could be discerned in later cohorts from Ukraine, but also there were other variables that influenced linguistic practices. For instance, Larisa came to the U.S. with her family in 1996 at the age of seven, and she recounted that she knew Ukrainian since it was taught in school, but spoke Russian language.

Since language usage is pivotal for self-identification where the participants lived and the degree of nationalism within their respective countries influenced their self-identification and related language usage. Even though there were official structures in place to perpetuate the Ukrainian language and culture after the republic gained its independence, there was still a strong tendency to speak Russian in Ukraine in 1999 the year Adleta and Yuri emigrated.

Inside the house we spoke Russian. With all of my friends we spoke Russian. In school we had to speak Ukrainian...but like not really because the teacher speak Ukrainian. We all had to after the Soviet Union broke up you had to speak Ukrainian. But that had to was not enforced [laughter] except the principal in our school she was...Ukrainian and she had like her whole Ukrainian heritage... (Adletaa; 11, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

Yuri lived in a city that was located in the east of Ukraine at the border of Russia. Even after eight years of Ukrainian independence the Russian influence persisted according to his narrative.

Ah language I went actually to Russian school. The books the textbooks and the teachers and the all the faculty all the students all people spoke Russian language. But there were classes where you could practice, learn and polish your Ukrainian language... (Yuri; 10, Age at arrival; Male,

However, the more recent immigrants had a different experience. Dessa, who left Ukraine in 2003 for the U.S., recounted how she learned Ukrainian from a friend, and that classic works read in school were still in Russian.

Well just because ah Russian is really popular in Ukraine. In the eastern yes...and we read a lot of books in Russian in Ukraine you know it wasn't ever like a ~~hian and~~ difference Russian. You know in 5th grade we were supposed to know Russian. There wasn't no like there was no pressure if you similar language and most people do know Ukrainian... (Dessa; 14, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

Nationalism and language usage are determined in part by the political spheres of influence; western Ukraine is more closely affiliated with the west and also is more nationalistic. In contrast, eastern Ukraine is geographically closer to Russia and is culturally influenced by it. The participants in this study typically reflected these differences associated with language and culture in their narratives. To illustrate, Genka, who arrived at age 12 in 2000, explained that she spoke Ukrainian exclusively, and that because she lived in western Ukraine there was a great emphasis on the Ukrainian language which was used everywhere. Five participants described the existing practice in the "israelized" tools of teaching

Ukrainian was taught to us the second language because Ukraine was a separate ah republic was one country that we were taught Ukrain

remember two years of a learning Ukrainian remember it...Ukrainian is similar to Russian get the gist of the conversation...(Vadim; 9, Age at arrival; Male, Ukraine).

However, the narratives of students who came from Belarus, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan reflected the dominant Russian influence during their childhood; Russian remained their first language, and their national language was taught either as a second language in school or it was not taught at all.

Yes they tried to teach it [Uzbek] because Uzbekistan was still under Russia I didn't learn any of it. I don't remember second language but there wasn't as much was the main language especially after the Soviet Union broke up Russian was still the main language in Uzbekistan. Everyone spoke the Russian language...We did learn a little bit of Hebrew... (Arman; 1

We also had to learn it's Tatar...because Tatarstan is very different from Russian. I only know Muslim Islam I want to say. I don't know my Dad's side ~~now because my father married a Russian~~ you know and not someone you know who is a Tatar it was never encouraged in me to learn that language...(Ilina; 9, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

During the post-Communist era there was not a great emphasis on teaching English as a second language, and when it was taught it was to be helpful in the U.S. context. Only nine of the Russian and Ukrainian students were introduced to English in their first country and none of them were fluent at the time of emigration which posed considerable challenges in their communication with teachers and peers during their integration in the U.S.

#### Academic Progress in Country of Origin

Within the Russian and Ukraine ~~there was a common~~ migrant theme associated with the structure of their school years; they stayed together as a group from

the first day of school until the end of 11<sup>th</sup> grade. And in retrospect, regardless of age of departure, they believed it was socially and academically beneficial.

School is a lot different than here. Well one through eleven. Everyone is in the same many people because you know have to accommodate for all the grades and say like in first grade there would be three different...class rooms like grade you know grade 1a, grade 1b, grade 1c and maybe one teacher for each class room and they would teach every subject. So you would stay in one class for you know reading, math you know English or Russian literature (9, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

All but three of the 34 Eastern European students attended formal school in their country of origin and 28 students said that they either made “excellent” or “very good” grades. However, 36 percent more of the Russian students compared to Ukrainian students stated that their academic record was “excellent.” Another narrative was the accelerated nature of their educational experience in their first country compared to what they later observed in the U.S. regardless of public or private school attendance (71 percent of the students had attended public school). The relatively few students who had attended private schools at one time in their first country reported that they were more rigorous compared to the public schools.

When I first started school I went to a private school for the first couple of years and that was very different from the traditional ah public school students in Russia... I had about 18 classes a day anywhere sciences and that was only for the first few years than ah what public school classes ah public school kids did and ah they kept raising the prices for private school. So after the second year we could no longer afford it and ah I went to public school... Well it was by far way ahead of the public school in every way (10, Age at arrival; Male, Russian).

Galina also recounted that in addition to the generally accelerated pace in the Russian school system, she attended a French immersion school where the expectations were

comparatively higher. Interestingly, in Russia students moved from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade to 5<sup>th</sup> grade since 4<sup>th</sup> grade was set aside for children who required remedial work. However, none of the participants narrated 4<sup>th</sup> grades in their country of origin was an issue “skip” for them in the U.S.

Both Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students discussed how they were treated as “older” children in the first country in terms given, and with respect to the largely unsupervised commute to school whether by public transportation or on foot. In Ukraine self-reliance and independence was stressed at a young age in school and at home as Yuri explains.

It was from first to third grade. I was very young and we had trips such as going to other schools and maybe singing in the choir. We had mostly the as I say it was more strict and more higher standard in academic curriculum as in ah we learned... to go play chess stuff from bed and every morning check the temperature check the maybe pressure ah weather ah is it cloudy is it sunny. We had to literally develop this way of thinking way of life to take care of ourselves from a very young age to be life where you're independent... (Yuri; 10, A)

The Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students and the general expectation to strive for early independence during their childhood created self-images that were frequently incongruous with the lower-level expectations of children in the American school context. And when their self-perceptions were not mirrored in the responses of adults in the U.S. school system during their acculturation, some of the participants reflected feelings of frustration.

### Socialization: Strong Friendship Bonds and Prejudice

Of the 31 students who attended formal school in their country of origin 81 percent of the interviewees expressed that they recalled having had “good” socializa

the Eastern European students recounted their recollections with considerable emotion when they talked about the close friendships they had formed.

I think it was fun ~~is right~~ ~~ahm~~ ~~Ilmeay~~ the school in trying to Ukraine is a lot different. Here it is a h that you go with all through school but in group and you stay with them h f a r t o n s g h r o a w d e o n people I don't know I think those people w forever... (Dessa; 13, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

What do I remember? Ah I went to school there until 4th grade so that was fun since I liked the school and I had a lot of friends. It was a close knit community...my friends were in all of my classes and we hung out before and after and so we were really close... (Alexis ;

An emphasis on the group rather than the individual was the norm in the post-

Communist era which facilitated close friendships according to several of the students.

We were you know we had sort of a bond that I never had with anyone here before...Whereas there ah it was a b o u t u s a s one girl who lived in the same building as me and the other three girls we went to school with each other we were in the same class ah it was about us...Like here you know in America I learned that you know when you refer for instance to your family and you have to say 'My family and I' whereas in my in Russian you would say 'us'...It's always us like we're all tog us... (Dimas; 8, Age of arrival; Female, Ukrai

For adolescents the socialization experience may be more complex in certain respects associated with their developmental stage. For example, Grigor, who was 14 years old when he emigrated from Russia stated that he "had qui he expressed that he was eager to leave when he became 14 due to challenges in socialization. He also discussed his gay sexual orientation, that Russians have prejudicial attitudes towards gay people, and that he did not "come out" until he was of college age in the U.S. Stefan, another adolescent at the time of emigration, speaks of his challenges in Russia:

Due to the establishment there... I wasn't I was one of those kids that got bullied in Not that they to uo vdeom it but you know... it could be because I was weaker... I don't know like the philosophy that there's an inside group and arrival; Male, Russia).

The ethnic makeup of students and their socialization experiences within their schools overall were similar to the experiences in their neighborhoods. However, their narratives also reflect variations that include not being aware of ethnic/racial differences at the time, being cognizant of those who were “not Russian,” parents' names, and painful subjection to prejudice and discrimination. Valerik, who was five, recalled the measure taken by his grandfather to protect him and his sister from discrimination in school, and Lena who was seven years older at the time of emigration offered observations of ethnic diversity in her school.

My mother would tell me that ah my grandfather actually named me and my sister, ah Jewish names. So, my name is r\_\_\_\_\_ and ah her name is \_\_\_\_\_ and you know Russian names are very typical names and she always told me she was always worried that when I would get in school I would be discriminated...(Valerik; 5, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

Well ah you know since we were entering ah school and traveling the same people for 11 years—in the first grade there weren't would see ah people who looked Korean but they lived here and spoke Russian and they didn't feel like they were Korean kids but ah the Uzbek kids were already there... (Calina; 12, Age at arrival; Female, Uzbekistan).

During the interview Eva, who arrived at age 10 from Ukraine, recounted some of the painful memories of prejudice and discrimination related to anti-Semitism in school. Even attendance at Hebrew school did not protect Eva from the stress of ethnic/religious tensions. She recalled how an eight-year-old boy in her class threw a chair at her causing a

painful injury; he had overheard Eva's father Jews belonged in Israel.

The narratives by participants who were five, six and seven years old at the time of emigration reflect differences in what they considered salient during their earliest school years that included fun children's celebrations, day teachers. The accounts by Galina and Inessa are representative of those who had described either happy or neutral kindergarten experiences. Galina remembers fondly the morning parties in kindergarten known as "utremik" and theessen

Ah we had like different like holiday things. It is called „utremik" which morning party I guess...The kids would have be like dances and you would wear costumes up...And the girls would always look forward to it because they got to wear lipstick...We were really really wrapped and we had these thick fur jackets and boots like the kids in the Christmas story could only like see your eyes because it was you know too cold...(Galina; 10, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

Inessa only attended kindergarten in Ukraine prior to emigrating to the U.S. at the age of six and what stands out in her mind is a culturally specific routine.

I played on the playground and I remember going to kindergarten and that was the only school...I remember that they made us c regular clothes and then when we got to kindergarten they made everybody put on you know ah basically knit leggings and I think one time I forgot mine and that was embarrassing... (Inessa; 6, Age at arrival; Female

Kalia and Petrov's narratives of early s levels. When trauma was associated with a ch seemed generally more expansive. Memories have been found to end and distinctive against the background of oth seven years old when she emigrated to the U.S., expressed that she doubted if she had her "own"

memories, and that perhaps they were just what others told her. Yet, she provided a detailed narrative of the day when she brought to school a gift from her mother whom she was separated

f r o m f o r a n e x t e n d e d p e r i o d o f t o t h e U n S e a n d h a d K a l i a l e f t K a l i a w i t h a n a u n t w h o w a s a u n i v e r s i t y s t u d e n t a n d l i v e d i n a d o r m .

I also remember when my Mom was already in America I actually she sent me a Barbie doll and it was like a wedding Barbie and she had ah and these Barbies have like a plastic ring she had like a wedding in her finger that where there was this little piece of white plastic stuck and it looks like a pearl or something. Ah and I took it to school one day and, of course, everyone thought that it was the coolest thing ever because it was this Barbie from America... And ah one of the girls broke she off the little plastic piece and so for the rest of the time my Barbie had like a hole in her finger that hole made me so distraught because that was the one thing that my Mom sent me...(Kalia; 7, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

Petrov emigrated to the U.S. from Russia at the age of five and the traumatic experiences that he recalled during the interview still seemed to resonate. As a very young child in his Russian kindergarten he felt as an “outsider” compared to the other children in his class. not conciliatory but rather contentious in general, where he felt singled out for brutal attacks by the other children, and where staff members did not come to his defense. Although Petrov expressed that he is not certain why he was treated unjustly, he reasons that it probably was because he was a culturally Jewish child within a community where diversity of any type was held suspect. Furthermore, Petrov’s narrative of an institutionalized discriminatory system that does not spare even the very young from unfair treatment. While recounting the incident Petrov expressed anger and frustration at what he perceived was intentional injustice because h

I remember the people that were like vested to have a personal interest in you they would not really help. I have some other instance I remember I was playing with this...toy car and I think I was just riding it over the floor and it actually pretty much exploded... It came apart and I know the teacher who like never never like said anything to other students for what they would do came up to me and instantly came up to me and said, 'Why did you break this car? Why did you break it? You have to go and buy another one now!' ...And I remember my mother like I remember my mother made me give up my shiny new red tricycle because I broke this like this car...What else? I remember I around the other children. We were supposed to take naps there ah I never really liked the other children! You know they were they all seemed so vicious... (Petrov; 5, Age at arrival; Male,

The participants narratives at spaces, reflect the educational structures, relationship with family members, socialization with peers, and the neighborhood environment. There is the potential that these aspects may continue to exert an influence on them in their lives. This may be particularly the case for the students who during the interview expressed a range of emotions that included nostalgia, joy, anger, sadness, and frustration when they recounted events from their childhood in their first country and emigrating to the U.S. As has been discussed previously, it is possible for human beings to recall a past event and experience the same emotions (Niedenthal et al in Smith-Lovin and Winkielman, 2010). It was often profound to hear their narratives of childhood occurrences as if they had just happened and the accompanying emotions that had not yet been resolved despite the passing of many years. It is possible that the degree and nature of emotions expressed associated with recollections of events during this developmental stage may be particularly intensive.

Comparisons of emergent patterns found in the examined further in Chapters Six and Seven.

### *Religious Practice in the Country of Origin and Secularization*

The post-1965 immigration stream is characterized by a greater diversity in religious places of worship, and it has been observed that the new immigrants brought different forms of Christianity and Judaism with them that influence existing practices (Hirshman, 2007:391).

There is considerable variation among the Russian and Ukrainian participants with respect to religious affiliation and/or practice in the post-Communist era, but the ideology of secularization under Soviet rule dominates the overall experience of the immigrant youth in this study.

P r e d o m i n a n t l y t h e R u s s i a n a n d U k r a i n i a n i m m i g r a n t s  
secularism was the norm in their homes with relatively low levels of domestic religiosity.

I think that for so many years of Communism I think that people have assimilated to the secular. Many Jewish people have assimilated to the Russian culture and have stopped practicing religion...(Luka; 12, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

My parents I guess they are Russian Orthodox I guess that's Christian but they don't practice. They're not religious or aren't (Inessa; 18, Age at arrival; Female, Belarus).

We didn't have any exactly [religious celebrations] when we were persecuted... I'm not married so my first last name was \_\_\_\_\_ which was my Mom's even change her last name \_\_\_\_\_ when she got married and had me because it is like so it is like a very Jewish sounding name so they thought it was impractical to have a Jewish name rather than a Ukrainian name... (Inessa; 18, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

At first it was because of Communism where it was prohibitive but afterwards it was still prohibitive but just not official Christmas. I know with Alt daine nora was... (Adrik; 18, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

Of the 33 participants who discussed religious affiliation and practice in their homes when they lived in Eastern Europe two thirds reported that religion was not practiced in their

homes. Whereas 21 (63.6%) stated that they did not practice any religion, nine (27.2%) did practice their religion, and three practiced

Eight of the nine students who practiced their religion were Ukrainian, and they were equally divided between being affiliated with Christianity and Judaism. However, even though there was also equal representation of Christians and Jews who did not practice their religion within the Ukrainian student group, two thirds of the Russian students were Christian. When the parents had different religious standpoints in the home, it is not surprising that most often the participants followed the traditions of the parent that was most active.

The respondents who were vested in their religion and/or felt that their family had been deprived of full religious expression discussed their experience with affect. To illustrate, although formally religious freedom was granted narrative reflects the informal impact because of the prejudicial attitudes held by people in the community.

I . Were you able to practice your holidays Menorah but it was it was never put out on know it was always lit the candle burned and you know it was put away... it was on the floor all the time . . . We never went I remember going with my family to the Synagogue that we found out that in a week or so we were to be going to Israel with both of my going Grandfathers went to the Synagogue. And that was probably the only time that I remember and I m sure that happened... ( J e l e n Russia).

Arman, who emigrated from Uzbekistan, explained that there were challenges to be openly Jewish in his community since there was a lack of synagogues, persistent discrimination, and he was subjected to teasing . He added that were to ask you a question or just started talking not to mention you re

Christian heritage also felt constraints in religious expression until the political climate toward religion relaxed under Gorbachev.

My grandparents were religiously still and even though they weren't aloud to practice ever connected everything with their religion and so we celebrated major holidays. Ah on Christmas it was like in England they have the 12 days of Christmas. We had that too... (Katarina; 7, Age at arrival; Female)

In contrast, a few of the nine participants who practiced their religion were able to do so without any type of constraint as Akim's testimony indicates. The composition of the enclave where the participants lived seemed to impact the degree of religious expression.

Ah at our summer home it was very closed grandfather and ah it was in the house. There it was a small community so there it was practiced... But ah in the city I don't have an association with the West was also changing I belonged to a congregation and my mother worked for the congregation she was well on her way to becoming a Rabbi... so we had friends in the congregation and we celebrated with them all of the Jewish holidays...(Akim; 9, Age at arrival; Male, Ukraine).

With increasing democratization in the former Soviet Republics different paths were taken by the children and their families with Vadim's testimony reflects interesting dynamics within his family, and the choice he ultimately made.

I was actually Christened or Baptized because my mother. Ah I remember on New Year's Eve at my grandmother she took me to church and I remember we were lined up and there were many kids there and ah the priest from the altar came by and he sprinkled water on us and I distinctly remember Russian Orthodox Church... my father was very secular in his views ah but also my mother and grandmother she kind of tried to teach me but I'm secular also... (Vadim; 9, Age at arrival)

Katya explains that even though her father is Jewish, and her mother is Russian Orthodox the suppression of religion in the Soviet Union has instilled a lasting atheism. At the same time, the family enjoys improvised traditions. Unlike Katya, there was discomfort for Lena when her parents who were atheists commemorated Easter. The Easter traditions as practiced in Ukraine were fond memories for Eva despite the reality of harsh anti-Semitism that she had experienced as a child. With obvious joy she recounted the colorful Ukrainian national dresses that she wore, the flower wreaths her mother helped her make for her hair, and participation in the

“ i n t e r n a t i o n a l l y k n o w n w e w e r e o b v i o u s l y U k r a i n i a n ”

Of all the secularized holidays New Year's was the most popular among the participants, and both Russian and Ukrainian students shared the sentiment that it was instituted by the Soviets to replace all religious traditions.

So, New Year's was what my Dad usually call a Soviet conspiracy to have a Christmas tree basically makes it its no religion Christmas and according to Soviet rule...You have your holidays under the tree everything like its one holiday Christian or a Jew or anybody...It was like you. Birth day and its the New Year's...even center of the city like the lighting ceremony. At midnight we would light the tree and everybody would drink and everybody would be happy everybody would play with fireworks...(Adleta; 11, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

Nonetheless participants such as Yuri also explained that Christmas had deep religious meaning for them despite the popularity of the holiday. Other participants described a mixed experience as indicated by Markov's narrative:

So, what they said is this is your new religion. This is the Communism. These are the new holidays. There's no more Christmas know...or Ramadan or anything. There's no more holidays. A huge holiday ah was New Year's. tree. The same idea...Ah we had like a Santa

called D u y h M o r o z . D u y h m e a n s l i k e G r a n d f  
Grandfather Frost was like the R u s s i a n S a n t a C l a u s f o r N e w Y e a  
D a y ... ( M a r k o v ; 6 , A g e a t a r r i v a l ; M a l e , U k r a

T h e c h i l d m i g r a n t s e x p e r i e n c e w i t h r e l i g i  
the influence of the dominant secular ideology. In the U.S. context where there was a greater  
o p e n n e s s t o r e l i g i o u s e x p r e s s i o n t h e p a r t i c i p  
religion or recommitment to secularism on philosophical grounds.

### *Favorite National Holidays and Events*

The salient national holidays and events that the participants recalled not only provide a  
further glimpse into their way of life during their childhood in the post-Communist era in Eastern  
Europe, their narratives let us see what celebrations were meaningful to them when they left their  
countries and what they may have missed after emigration. In addition to the secularized  
religious holidays, the participants recalled commemoration of national events honoring different  
groups of the population that reflect the post-Communist era in their childhood. Galina  
described several holidays or traditions that she and her family observed.

F e b r u a r y 2 3 r d i s a S o l d i e r s M e n s R e m e m b e r  
men gifts. Ah we give gifts for every holiday pretty much ah whatever the  
holiday is. Ah M a r c h 8 t h i s t h e W o m e n s D a y a n d w  
these flowers are called but they were literally branches with little fuzzy flowers  
t h e y r e s o f t g r e y [ P u s s y W i l l o w s ] . . . a n d t h  
people always do jokes on each other. My Dad always did to us he would like  
h e d p u t l i k e a h u g e v a s e i n o u r b a c k p a c k  
w a l k a r o u n d s c h o o l w i t h a b i g v a s e b e c a u s e  
[laughter]...(Galina; 10, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

W o m e n s D a y w a s i n s t i t u t e d b y t h e S o v i e t U  
who pointed out that this was a good part of the Soviet Union where everyone was equal.

However, there were differences associated with the significance of the May 1<sup>st</sup> celebration for

R u s s i a n   a n d   U k r a i n i a n   s t u d e n t s   a s   L u k a   s   a n d

When I was younger May 1st was a big holiday which was I think the International Labor Day. There were parades in Russia. That was in Communist in Communist times. Ah May 9th which was ah Victory Day that was when World War II was over... That was ah a big ho in Russia have fire works. I remember we would always go down to the River bank to watch ka;hl 2, Age at arrival; Male, Russia). (Lu

And then there is May 1st... Ah it was about were being remembered... Yeah so it was a big both of my grandparents on my way sad side w big celebration always and there was a par arrival; Female, Ukraine).

When Ukraine became an independent nation, some of the celebrations were continued and others were distinctive according to the students. For example, September 1<sup>st</sup> was

exclusively discussed by Ukrainian students as the first day of school where teachers would be

h o n o r e d   b y   t h e   c h i l d r e n .   V a d i m   s   r e c o l l e c t i o n

era in which he was raised until age nine. His family emigrated to the U.S. in June of 1991, the year of the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

I t   w a s   i n t e r e s t i n g   a n d   a h   I   w a s   a c t u a l l y   a   C h o r n o b y l   e x p l o d e d ... w e   a c t u a l l y   w e n t   t o   t h e   c e l e b r a t i o n s   t h e r e   w a s   a l s o   o n e   o n   L e n i n ' s   L e n i n   a l l   o v e r   t h e   c i t y   a n d   w e   w o u l d   g o   t o   t h i s   p a r t i c u l a r   o n e   a n d   e v e r y b o d y   w o u l d   l e a v e   t u l i p s ... a n d   t h e n   t h e r e   w a s   a l s o   a   s m a l l e r   C e l e b r a t i o n   a h   i n   c a s e   y o u   h a d   a   v e t e r a n   i n   y o u r   f a m i l y   s p e c i f i c   [ t r a d i t i o n s ]   b e s i d e s   t h e   b i g   p a r a d e   i n   K i e v   b u t   e v e r y b o d y   i n   m y   f a m i l y   w o u l d   c o n g r a t u l a t e   m y   g r a n d f a t h e r   w h o   w a s   a   v e t e r a n   o f   W W I I .   T h e y   w o u l d   w i s h   h i m   g o o d   l u c k .   T h e y   w o u l d   g i v e   h i m   f l o w e r s ... ( V a d i m ;   9 ,   A g e   a t   a r r i v a l ;   M a l e ,   U S A )

During the discussion of national holidays only one participant mentioned the Independence Day for Ukraine, and those from other former Soviet Republics talked about

ethnic traditions that they observed such as the commemoration of the first day of spring in Kazakhstan.

Everybody goes outside and you cook these things that you probably never tasted. But its kinda like dough and you fry it in hot oil...and you know the whole neighborhood comes together and they cook all day long...(Andreea; 9, Age at arrival; Female, Kazakhstan).

Within the child migrants narratives, family favorite pastimes in their country of origin—especially by those who arrived at younger ages.

### *Activities in the Country of Origin*

There were differences in the participants childhood activities. Being involved in “structured students childhood, but not of their Ukrainian more Russian participants compared to Ukrainian participants reported that they were involved with different and/or several structured activities that included music, art, sports, dance, chess, fencing, travel and foreign language study.

Yeah in Russia I went to music school...Ah I think I was in second or third grade.

I didn't play clarinet then. In fourth I played the grade and in middle school. I played the piano and clarinet...(Sergei; 9, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

My parents really had me involved in every single thing, but I was in dance, art and music school besides attending regular school...(Calina; 12, Age at arrival; Female

Unstructured activities such as playing in their neighborhoods, spending time at summer homes, soccer games with friends, and chess games with relatives was discussed by 28 of the Russian and Ukrainian participants. How the child migrants routinely lived their lives when they were not in school mattered during their adjustment period in the U.S. When the participants

were not able to pursue accustomed activities during their acculturation it amplified the discordant world they had entered. Further discussion of the influence of these changes and their emotional reaction to them in conjunction with other aspects of the cultural and linguistic transition in their first homes, neighborhoods and schools will be included within Chapter Five.

### **Discussion**

Consensus on memory formation and retrieval has not been reached. How individuals process and construct meanings of past events is of interest to researchers in different academic fields and illustrations of selected standpoints have been considered previously. Furthermore, there is not agreement as to when children have the capacity to have memories. There are investigators who have found that children as young as two years old have memories, but others have argued that children who are age five and younger do not have memories. This debate is particularly relevant for those who design research methodologies about the experiences of children in general and immigrant children in particular. It has been challenging to determine the boundaries of categories for the analysis of data concerning immigrant children, and the prevalent standpoint that foreign born children resembled the native-born American children has often been the rationale for creating one research category rather than two. Associated with this practice has been the debate over the reliability of data concerning children's first country, culture and language. However, recently scholars have questioned these practices and have advocated for empirical research based on such criteria as age of arrival and child developmental stages in order to learn more about

In this study 34 university age students who emigrated during childhood from Eastern Europe provided narratives of their recollections of their way of life in their countries of origin.

During the interviews the students were asked to describe what they remembered about their family life, homes, neighborhoods, neighbors, schools, friendship groups, religious practice, and traditions. A range of narratives were selected by age of arrival in order to compare the responses of the younger children, ages five through nine, with the older children, nine through fourteen. Differences in the participants' de account for some of the differences in the nature of their narratives. That is, for example, those whose narratives depicted recalled events of their socialization in the country of origin when they were in early childhood tended to focus on things that were salient for that age group. And the students who were older were in a position to add more content to their narratives because of the additional years of education and inculcation in their first culture. However, some of the participants who were as young as five years old at the time of departure provided considerable detail of places and circumstances. A partial explanation for the variation may be attributed to individual differences associated with the degree of maturity of the child migrants. What seems particularly important for this investigation is the overall consensus that the years they had spent in Eastern Europe as children have made an indelible impression on them. Concomitantly, their descriptions of their way of life provide essential context that elucidates their frame of reference from which they create meanings through their narratives, and they also serve as internal foundations for emotional reactions connected to sentiments.

During the interviews the act of discussing their memories of their childhood homes, family, friends, and circumstances evoked strong emotions in many of the participants. Since there is evidence that human beings are capable of thinking about a past event and experiencing the same emotions felt at that time, then this capacity could potentially serve as a mechanism

w h e r e b y i m m i g r a n t c h i l d r e n s r e c o l l e c t i o n s a b  
maintained. There are further implications for recollections of their way of life or events that  
occurred during school age in their country of origin since the emotions engendered may exert an  
effect reflective of that developmental stage. Overall, the narratives of recalled childhood  
experiences of their countries of origin lend support for taking into account the potential  
i n f l u e n c e o f t h e i r f i r s t c u l t u r a l c o n t e x t o n  
research methodologies. Further support for this standpoint will be provided in the following  
c h a p t e r t h a t w i l l f o c u s o n t h e R u s s i a n a n d U k  
pre-migration experiences, departure, and journey to the U.S. Selected dimensions of the child  
m i g r a t i o n e x p e r i e n c e s w i l l b e d i s c u s s e d i n r e l a t i o n s h i p t o s u c h f a c t o r s a s t h e d e g r e e o f t h e i r  
preparedness for immigration, reaction to separation from people and way of life they would  
leave behind, emotions associated with the departure, and the general condition of powerlessness  
of children.

## CHAPTER 4

## RECOLLECTIONS OF CHILDHOOD PRE-EMIGRATION PROCESS

## C P F " U C [ K P I " ð I Q Q F " D [ G ö

*K " f k f p ø v " c e v w c n n { " m p q y " y g " y g t g " n g c x k p i " w p v  
leaving the central train station in Kiev because actually you could see our house  
h t q o " v j g " y k p f q y " q h " v j g " v t c k p " c p f " K " t g o g o d g  
just sad that I was leaving my friends and leaving my own home...(Vadim, 9, Age  
at arrival; Male, Ukraine).*

For children whose lives were disrupted through the emigration process, it is important to consider the phases of pre-emigration and departure in order to enhance our understanding of what separation from objects of social attachment reflect social losses" (Gordon in Handel, et al, 2007: 1 of these phases in their lives is potentially greater when the memories are of emotionally laden severed childhoods. If their experiences were positive and they developed a sense of attachment for places, people and surroundings their ensuing severance of their way of life could engender sentiments of loss. On the other hand, if their early socialization was reflective of challenges or hardships then leaving that way of life perhaps could foster a sense of relief at the time of emigration. Regardless of the remembered of the experiences are those that are distinctive, u Conway in Howe, 2000: 78). Within the child migrants reflected these elements.

In order to understand the full implications of childhood cultural and linguistic disruptions, we must keep in mind that the na distinctive. Children attach meanings to people, places and things in ways that may be different

from adults. Whereas adults have passed through their physical and emotional developmental stages, children are still in a fluid state of becoming (Erikson, 1959; 1980). During these emergent stages individuals might respond with greater emotion to their environment as well as to changes that may occur within that environment. In part this may be coupled with the inability to fully comprehend the complexities of the world in which they live, and with the comparative sense of powerlessness as children to control what occurs in their lives. Having children's voices included in the decisions that them is gaining support in the field of education (Cefai and Cooper, 2010; Feldman, 2008) and is being considered for policy concerning divorce processes (Pryor and Trinder in Scott, et al, 2004).

In order to gain insights into the emotional import for children whose lives were disrupted through the emigration process, it is important to consider first the phases of pre-emigration and departure and how separation from objects of social attachment may impact young children. The narratives by the 34 Eastern European students who were child émigrés to the U.S. indicate variations in reaction to the departure from their first country. The patterns within their narratives can be characterized broadly by a sense of loss, trauma, happy anticipation, or not fully understanding the significance of emigration. Through their narratives we gain insights into how immigrant children may first encounter the initial scenes in the U.S., what comparisons/contrasts they made with expectations, and what aspects remained salient in their recollection as young adults.

In this chapter the emigration process, parental reasons for leaving their first country, who made the actual decision to leave, their reaction to the idea of

emigration, the nature of their departure from their first home, and first impressions of the U.S. will be discussed in relationship to their feelings about these phases of cultural disruption during their childhood.

### **Emigration Process**

During the interview we focused on memories that the Russian and Ukrainian child migrants may have had of the time when plans were being made for emigration to the U.S. We discussed who the decision makers were, and whether or not the participant knew of the plan and/or was included in the decision-making process as well as any feelings that may have been engendered when informed about emigration. Nearly three quarters of the respondents reported that other family members had preceded them to the U.S., the dominant pattern of immigration for the Eastern European students and their families (N=25; 73.5%). Furthermore, ten participants had maternal relatives in the U.S., twelve joined paternal relatives, two had both maternal and paternal relatives, and in one case a step uncle invited the family to come. Consequently, only nine (26.5%) of the interviewees and their families were the original immigrants, and these students were exclusively Russian participants.

Predominantly the child migrants arrived in the U.S. within nuclear family units (N=24; 70.6%), however, three of those reported that a parent had preceded them to establish a home for the family. The remaining participants emigrated either with single parents and/or extended family members. Although the household for these Eastern European students was small, most often consisting of parents and the participant or parents, the participant and one sibling, in one instance 11 members of the family emigrated at the same time. When close extended family

members emigrate together it cushions the jarring nature of cultural disruption for children and also provides an immediate support system during their acculturation in the U.S.

Most often the Eastern European participants provided more than one reason for emigration during the post-Communist era. As pull factors they cited employment opportunities, educational opportunities, a better life, and push factors included experiences of discrimination and prejudice. Comparisons by national origin indicated that there were differences in rationales for leaving their countries of origin. Employment opportunities were reported as the impetus for emigration by a third of the Russian students, but more Ukrainian students included educational opportunities in their rationales for coming to the U.S.

I guess they thought that America would have better opportunities for me like job wise and everything... so I guess that I would have a better life...(Alexis; 10, Age at arrival; Female, Belarus).

Yes mostly for work opportunities... There was a currency was really falling ah I think by the time we were leaving it was like 2,000 of that for one dollar. There really was a lot of inflation. You had to wait in line for bread... Just to pay for our tickets we had two big bags of money that were about 2 million or 2 ½ million Sum... it economic conditions were bad and ah I'm Jewish Union it became a separate state ah since it is a Muslim jobs for Jewish people but it was starting to get very difficult for my mother and father to find jobs there... (Arman; 10, Age

He [Father] liked it here [U.S.] and he liked that he could find a job. He could get money and he had a lot more rights because when I was born the Soviet Union was still in existence... so we lived in like religion [Byzantine Chantybur neighborhood] It was ab u can't h of these Communist rules... So you couldn't mean there were but there were limitations to everything. So he found that there was more freedom here. We. ha Sœ mœ rœ i d r i g t h t back...(Katarina; 7, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

For some the discrimination that they had experienced coupled with the anticipated mobility issues for children in the post-Communist republics was cited as push factors.

We got out because we're culturally Jewish and not welcome in Russia and given the state of Russia at the time America seemed was a far better choice. And my relatives and I were able to leave because Russia had this program for people of Jewish heritage. You can leave Russia or you could go to Israel or you could go to America and we chose to go to America...(Petrov; 5, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

I guess the main reason was because of all these things in school that were going on. My mother told me of all...that happened to my father and to her while they were in school. Schools are really different. They take you to work...ah there is like months of work and they all have to live in these like shacks and barracks...And they take them out of school to do work to do labor...My grandfather would have to drive me to the barracks to take her home so, that she... (Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

Six Ukrainian and four Russian students included prejudice and discrimination as a major reason for leaving their country of origin. The most blatant expressions of anti-Semitism that were experienced first-hand by participants during their childhood were recounted by the Ukrainian participants. Their narratives included accounts of authorities ignoring racist acts, siding with the perpetrator or participating in the discrimination. Experiences of maltreatment impact individuals of all ages, but when children are the targets and/or the witnesses of hostilities the recollection of the events may have life long emotional effects. As the participants from the former Soviet Republics described the acts they had witnessed during their childhood the emotional import of these experiences on them was evident during the interviews.

...I heard people in public transportation... and asked, 'Are Jews bad for this country?' That was in Ukraine in 1994 and the committee that researched this was actually in my city. And the lady of that committee lived three houses away from me...and she was the one who absolutely said that Jews were the worst possible thing that happened to us...so a lot of people say well we don't care for them and you know...in old Ukrainian it just means Jew, but in the newer sense in Ukraine it is like an offensive way to say that word about who they are!...(Adleta; 11, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

Eva's narrative of the discrimination against descriptions of the humiliation that her father had to endure and his powerlessness. Consequently, her sense of security being with her father was compromised as a result of these acts against him that he was forced to accept.

Ah well my Dad has a little darker skin...And they would always say you know you look like ah Armenian which really was for his ID and he was always scared because It was always the public transportation...So especially on trains I remember they were always stopping. And I was scared because I was little. You know I remember I was like 8 or 9 and I was scared like would they take him to the police...and you know also I mean cause I look features are a little different and but I remember even you know in the train and the search tactics they literally would be. They would take him [her father] they would request him to take everything off because they thought you know that he might have a gun. And and I I would see that...cause I was watching him how they were requesting him to raise his hands I mean that's how it was. You were they just would feel you over your body and they would feel your pockets ah through your jeans and when I came home I they thought that I might have had a gun. ... You inferred that he was foreign...and I even remember my parents would talk to me about it and saying, „Well, don't worry about person. ... (Arrival; Female, Ukraine) e o

Children during their primary socialization may feel emotions more intensely under certain circumstances, and the effects of those experiences could potentially be long-lasting. However, it is also necessary to take into account that some of the participants who met with rejection in Eastern Europe during childhood were able to offset these memories with recollections of pleasurable experiences. Apart from the balance of negative and positive recalled childhood events, these occurrences are part of the society in which the participants were first socialized. Consequently, their psyches may have been impacted by the social and cultural dynamics of the post-Soviet era during their formative

narratives suggest. These accounts serve as contrasts during the acculturation of the child migrants in the U.S., and may foster a dual sense of reference. Some of the students reflect their participation in given circumstances and/or information that may have been shared by parents.

Other conditions within the former Soviet Union that stimulated the desire for families to leave were food and product shortages, dislike of the Soviet system, corruption in country, violence, and mandatory draft in the Russian military.

They saw how hard it is ah at that time it was the worst time in Kazakhstan...it was very corrupt. They would line up for gas...because of a low supply of gas and heat. And in the winter there was no way to heat food because you only had gas...so after studying so hard at school they were barely making anything but in America is the land of opportunities and that me and my brother should be here because if we tried as hard as they did we would be making much more money you know a parents were physicians.] (Andreea; 9, Age of arrival; Female, Kazakhstan).

But ah when the Soviet Union broke down obviously those universities became private universities...so to actually get in there even if you test well and everything else you need to have money. So you know here if you are a son of a big political whatever I mean they will throw out the rules...(Calina; 12, Age at arrival; Female, Uzbekistan).

The transitional government in Russia after the U.S.S.R. collapse was commonly been depicted within the participants narratives frightening incident that occurred when he was a young child.

Ah well when I asked my parents about the main reason why we came here they tell me that at the time Russia was very unstable politically and there was a lot of ah I guess corruption. I actually remember a time when my Dad got pulled over by a police officer and he was threatened to be shot in front of the whole family and kids... I was in the car when this happened making a sharp turn and there was a cop on sure if he broke the law the driving laws in Russia, but for some reason the cop pulled my Dad over and they were talking about something and the police officer told my Dad to roll down the window. And me and my sister were sitting there

w i t h m y M o m a n d h e s a i d i f y o u d o t h i s a g a  
arrival; Male, Russia).

V i o l e n c e i n R u s s i a w a s a l s o a c a t a l y s t f o r

Ah one of the reasons I think there was violence so frequently...same year ah I  
w a s a s s a u l t e d ... w e l l h e w a s m y D d y i n u n k b u t a h i  
R u s s i a ... i t s i n t h e m i d d l e o f J u l y . F o r t h  
the bus stop there was some altercation you know ah I was hit in the face with ah  
bottle...(Stefan; 14, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

Recently, Akim learned from his mother that the primary reason for emigration was to  
prevent him from being drafted. What is telling here is that he never understood this primary  
motive until later in life.

In retrospect my mother and I were talking about it. She did it to get me out of  
the army...Service was mandatory and the Russian army was notorious for its  
h o r r o r s t o r i e s b y t h e s u p e r i o r o f f i c e r s . . .  
keep me out of military service...I always liked what the military stands for and  
the structure and how it is supposed to work. And I suppose I could have gotten  
lucky. Ah my father served. His father served. My grandfather served. My great  
g r a n d f a t h e r . . . i n W W I I a n d s o I c o m e f r o m a  
that I really missed out on the military discipline...(Akim; 9, Age at arrival; Male;  
Ukraine).

Hardships due to inflation and lack of basic products in post-Communist Eastern Europe  
w a s a n o t h e r t h e m e t h a t e m e r g e d w i t h i n t h e p a r  
f a t h e r f l s u e n t i a l r o l e i n t h e i r c o m m u n i t y a n d h i  
" c h a e t h p n e a y " w h e r e "...Y o u h a d t o l i k e s t r i k e  
through friendships and stuff just to make sure you were guaranteed like raw materials or  
s u p p l i e s o r w h a t e v e r s o t h a t y o u r c o m p a n y c o u  
i n d i c a t e s t h a t h i s f a m i l y w a s a f f e c t e d b y t h e  
connections.

I mean at that point the economy had collapsed. Everything like sucked. Like there was nothing going on like you can't line for two days and nights. At 2 AM she would get in line outside of the dairy store because every Tuesday they would deliver milk but they only had enough for like one hundred people...It was like ah there was Black Friday where you would line up all night...Like a Black Friday every week! Everything was limited and so everything was rationed...if you were you would go to the store even if you had money is nothing on the shelf...(Markov, 6, Age at arrival; Ukraine).

In the following section we will consider the decision-making process that the participants recalled. Their narratives reflected overall low levels of empowerment during this stage of their migration experiences.

### ***Who Decides about Emigration: Gender and National Considerations***

In terms of agency around the decision to migrate, not surprisingly these children overwhelmingly were excluded from the process. Moreover, many of them only came to understand the reasons for leaving later in life. Of the 34 participants, 26 (76.5%) reported that the parents decided to emigrate to the U.S., two stated that the parents and extended family made the decision, and two others said it was the parents, sibling and participant.

Well my parents just kind of told me that  
Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

The decision was definitely made by both of my parents. Then, we discussed everything and they made the decision together as a family kind of you know... (Dima; 8, Age of arrival; Female, Ukraine)

The adolescents that participated in the project also reported that their parents did not include them in the decision making process that led to emigration.

I was not involved...Ah it was my mother who  
age of arrival; Male, Russia).

As was the case historically, a few of the whereby one parent preceded the family to find employment and a home, but later in the interview they discussed the emotional consequences of separation from their parents during childhood.

Oh well I was three when my Dad left, and where he wasn't there... (Katarina; 7, Age at

And in Lena's case there was general agree be the outcome based on her father's exposure

My father had this business for some years before we left and um he also liked to travel. He was traveling kind of to different countries. He went to America a couple of times. He went to Germany and France...to do business there. And so there was always...there was some talk for a couple of years that this is something that might happen...and that's why I wanted that if that were to happen I could function...(Lena; 12, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

While in about half of the cases students perceived that both parents made the decision to leave, in the other half it was predominantly mothers not fathers who forced the issue or made the push. Nearly as many mothers initiated emigration as did two parents, and at times the mothers needed to persuade the fathers, according to the participants (Both parents: N=12, 46.2%; mothers: N=11, 42.3%; fathers: N=3, 11.5%). And although mother agency in the emigration decision-making process occurred in Russian and Ukrainian families, it was more pronounced among the Russian students narrative decision-makers compared to 7.7 percent of the fathers. In contrast, 27.7 percent of Ukrainian mothers were the decision makers compared to 15.4 percent of the Ukrainian fathers. The reasons for the gender disparity for this dimension may be associated in part with single-parent headedness, instability of the marriage, and/or cultural norms. Each of these statuses has

implications for children who are contending with cultural and linguistic disruptions. However, historically there were also different gender conventions within the Ukrainian culture compared with the Russian culture. Whereas patriarchy became the norm over time in Russia, gender equality was valued among Ukrainians stemming from their ancient historical roots where goddess worship was prevalent and harmonious relationships between females and males were perpetuated. Ukrainian women and men shared the domestic responsibilities within the home on an equal basis, but the years of dominance by Russia and Soviet rule that actively dictated gender and family roles to serve the State made a lasting impact on gender roles within the private and public spheres. Consequently, confusion of gender self-identity occurred and it resulted in the “d e m a s c u l i n i z a t i o n” o f m a l e s i n U k r a i n e ( G o v o of Russian men in the household (Ashwin and Lytkina, 2004). Accordingly, while males may exert their power in the public sphere within their homes the women typically make the pertinent management decisions for their household. Essentially, if men are not able to be successful as breadwinners then their influence in the home is particularly compromised.

In the accounts by Russian and Ukrainian students all of the 11 mothers who initiated leaving Eastern Europe for the U.S. had a high level of education; i.e., a college education or more. Only three of the seven Russian mothers in this group were still married and emigrated w i t h t h e p a r t i c i p a n t s f a t h e r s , a n d o n e o f t h Additionally, one of the Russian mothers was widowed and the remaining mothers were divorced. In comparison, only one Ukrainian mother had experienced disruption of her family u n i t a s a r e s u l t o f h e r h u s b a n d s d e a t h ; s h e Since most of the participants did not know the educational and occupational status of their

fathers who did not emigrate with them, there were very few cases suitable for comparisons on the dimension of mother agency in the emigration process. However, of the four cases, two Russian and two Ukrainian, where both parents were present when the mothers initiated leaving their first country, the mothers had a higher educational status compared to the fathers.

Furthermore, one of the two Ukrainian mothers was nearly exclusively responsible for raising the

children while working for necessity for the most part source unsuccessful due to an unpredictable economic his mother's decision since she seems to have chemist in the U.S. compared to his vocation as an artist. In other c leave the country of origin for the U.S. stemmed from a desire to see their children have improved living conditions and opportunities compared to their existing circumstances.

My Mom just one day she randomly told me that she got a job at ah \_\_\_\_\_ University... she's a chemist. So she got me that me and my Dad the three of us [that] both of my parents and I would be going to America... (Male, Russia); 9, Age at arrival

Yeah at first he was hesitant but then ah especially when...we sold everything and lived in an apartment...he went along with i Female, Uzbekistan).

And my Dad said, 'No, I don't want to! I don't want to... And my Mom had to make my Dad move started losing more investments in the company... Then, finally my uncle, my Dad's brother, said. 'I don't care. I'm b And it was pretty much it was the decision of my Mom pushing that he did it... (Adleta; 11, Age at arrival; Female, Uk

In another instance, Dessa's mother and father mother had a higher occupational position. She recounted that her mother had entered the lottery

to win a green card to emigrate for ten consecutive educational opportunities for the children more

You know in Ukraine you have kind of like a lottery to win a know if it's only in Ukraine... basically you apply for it and then it's just like a random did it just for fun because she wanted us to have an education in the United States and maybe in any other country. So she just did it without my Dad knowing. For every year she did it and that was the last year. She said to herself this is the last year thhaatt slimt .do iAnngd itth aatn we won...(Dessa; 13, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

The same educational and occupational attainment of parents was described by two participants where marriages ended in divorce, and where the mother was the decision-maker in the emigration. And in two other cases of reported mother agency the parents had identical occupations (pharmacists and attorneys). One emigrate included a general dissatisfaction with life in Russia and Ukraine, and for Grigoriya's mother it was her desire to divorce his father and marry an American who was working in Russia.

R: Ah my mother's plan at first was to emigrate and take up German learning the language and then she changed her mind... I: And your father was Ok with the plan? R: I did most of the work. My Mom took care of (Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

I think it was just her dream the vision. She always Mom's like she wanted to get out of Ukraine. She wanted to get out of Russia. She wanted to go to America for a long time... It wasn't from me like their breakup was not because they had problems with their relationship. It was because she wanted to leave to go to some sort of like they wanted different things... (Age at arrival; Male, Russia)

What happened was she worked with him for several years in Russia for several years and at that point my mother's marriage was not salvageable... (Grigoriya; 14, age of arrival; Male, Russia)

The patterns discerned in the participants' emigration process indicate to a certain degree that their high educational attainment and occupational status within the post-Communist context may have bolstered their power positions within the household. Mothers with an edge in the power relationship within the home seemed to advocate for projected employment opportunities for themselves in the U.S. context and/or for overall improvement in life style and educational opportunities for their family.

In comparison to the mothers who advocated for emigration there were considerably fewer fathers. In the three cases of father agency where both parents emigrated with the respondent, the parents had comparable education and occupational status. Other variables such as Jewish conservatism linked to patriarchy may have been an important variable in at least two of the cases where the father urged emigration. Anti-Semitism was at least one of the main reasons for leaving the first country, and at times it was the central push for emigration to the U.S.

So my Dad wanted to leave . My Mom didn't really want to go . Ah she was like scared to start new like fresh to start from the beginning she was afraid of change a bit . And my Dad kinda wanted to leave with you know stay with me like my Mom and . . . I think I would stay there , and he'll take my sis to America, and my Mom could either join him or not. Then, my Mom decided she would she would do it... (Marek; Age at arrival)

The decision-making process to leave the former Soviet republics as recounted by the participants in this study was stimulated by the circumstances specific to the post-Communist era, but it also reflects the influences of power relationships associated with gender, educational attainment, and occupational status as instituted in Russia and Ukraine during that time period. Importantly for this investigation of childhood migration, the Eastern European students who

described family disruptions at the time of upheaval connected with migration may have additional challenges to overcome.

### *Child Agency in Decision to Emigrate*

The overriding theme in the family decision-making process about emigration was the lack of child agency, but there are a few negative cases worth considering. Four of the Russian and Ukrainian participants were given a choice to emigrate or remain in their country of origin after the parents made the decision. The consequences of choosing not to go to the U.S. would mean separation from their parents which has obvious connotations for young children. On the other hand, they had strong bonds with their grandparents who were instrumental in raising them and the prospect of leaving them behind was also painful. Also, the parental influence through reasoning and material enticements on the child migrants during the decision-making process is apparent in the accounts. The ages of the participants at the time of departure were six, eight, and two were ten. As can be seen, there was an emotional toll in her decision-making process to go with her parents or remain with the grandmother and all that was familiar to her. However, as she recounted later in the interview, the decision she made in childhood was to exact a further emotional toll when her grandmother died just before traveling to join the family in the U.S.

I said you know what I'm going to stay here decision and you know you have to do what is best because for one you can see that you are being discriminated against and two you understand you need to go with your family... It was hard but the thing choice... My parents said you see this is a p gets this chance. Not everybody gets a chance to have this permanent residence... You get to come here and you know you actually get a chance to go to school ah like an English ESL which is you know is an English learning school... And so I and she was the grandmom who raised me during my childhood and so it was difficult for me... so my grandmom would actually be alone... I was

thinking you know almost what is better to leave your friends behind...To leave your past behind? To leave your grandmom behind? Or to go away knowing that you would prevent discrimination. In other words I knew that I would not be discriminated against. In America I would not see this discrimination that I felt in Ukraine. So at the same time I didn't have the inside with you know you have to face the facts. place and you're going to be around people accept you. And acceptance obviously is m 10, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

Inessa was incredulous at the idea of her parents encouraging her to decide to remain in Ukraine as a six-year-old when they were in the decision making process to emigrate to the U.S.

I don't really know why but ~~were~~ remembering to go over there and we're going to sort of s here. How do you feel about that? And t behind did not really feel good I at all so can't even believe they were asking me thi I do remember that. I remember them sayin behind! But I guess some young parents w child over and struggling, but I'm glad that didn't a choose to not go with your parents, that would not be a normal child [laughter]...(Inessa; 6, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

When Jelena felt reluctant to leave her home, she recalls that her parents presented the emigration as an enjoyable exploratory trip to persuade her.

Ah well I'm not sure if they lied to me or was to happen. But they told me that you know they got an invite from my grandmother's sister and they were going to c we kind of prefer. And you know everyone was talking about America America America is just a great place! And so I w World is there...What eight-year-old in the world would not be bribed by Disney World if they were asked!...(Jelena; 8, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

In addition to opportunities, democracy, the presence of family members and the appearance of U.S. communities were also cited as pull factors for children who were given a choice to emigrate. To illustrate, Galina s approved for emigration to the U.S., and Galina accompanied them as a guest with arrangements

for her to return to live with her mother in Russia but decided instead to live permanently in the U.S.

He [father] actually asked me if I wanted to stay...and we talked about it and I said „yeah“. So he said well call your Mom stayed with my Dad's friends for the first few to live...we came in August and we stayed through October and then in October I had to call my Mom and tell her that I was mad at me. Ah but I guess the house we stayed in and like seeing how clean it was and seeing how big everything is and ah being like available everything is. And my sister being here and like most of my family being here versus coming back to Russia and just living just with my Mom who works all the time and like going to school where I had to go by myself where like here everything is so close...it's like much more of a safe feel to take the ah the subway and the bus by myself every day to school...I mean in Russia it's fine but here like nobody would crossing the street to school like there's seen that. I was like what is this person doing? [laughter]...(Galina; 10, Age at arrival; Russia).

And Kalia recounted how her mother emigrated to the U.S. when she was six years old, and during her absence she lived w seventh birthday she traveled by herself from Russia to join her mother in the U.S.

While the participants describe playing a role in the decision making, a close reading of the cases also reveals that their choices were highly constrained by the decisions already made by adults around them. I was more ~~and~~ ~~desire to stay with their parents~~ the “ch rather than a desire to emigrate or in others the preferences and logic of their parents was accepted despite considerable internal strife about the losses involved. The powerlessness of not being part of the decision-making process or being included in a constrained manner may influence the socialization and emotions of child migrants in distinctive ways.

### *Did They Have Time to Prepare for Emigration?*

Changes in accustomed routines can become unsettling for children, but advance preparation has been found to offset the effect. When the participants discussed the pre-migration phase, nearly two thirds of the Eastern European students reported that they had advance notice about the plan for emigration, but 27 percent more Russian students were informed about the plan compared to the Ukrainian students. At the same time, their narratives indicated that while some parents discussed the forthcoming migration with them others simply informed them that they would be moving to the U.S. The selected accounts by the participants depict the degree of preparation before the departure. Although Dima did not know the import of the documents that the mail man delivered, the ensuing interview process in Moscow may have served as an introduction to the changes that would occur.

I remember the mail man ah I was outside playing and he gave me a big like envelope it was a yellow kind of envelope. It was really big and thick and he told me he showed me how to open it. Give it to your parents so not I didn't know what it was but I just ran had to go to Moscow. We had to take the trip to Moscow and there was like an interview. Ah and my Mom I remember telling me like to answer directly only certain questions you know like directly to these people and to be a good girl and not to cry or anything like that...They asked me like when I was born my name stuff like that it was simple answered. I don't remember didn't pay attention. I just wanted a Barbie (Female, Ukraine).

For eight participants, five Russian and three Ukrainian child migrants, leaving their country of origin came as a “surprise.”

It was very surprising. I remember packing too...the last thing I remember packing was a pair of scissors that I thought were entirely essential to me.

[Laughter]... (Adrik; 6, Age at arrival; Male)

I'm the only one that didn't know anything at arrival (Dima; 9, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

I didn't know that we were leaving until I was packed...Not for four months ahead before the actual date when I found out that but my mother had known it for a while but I was only 14 so no [laughter] I had no idea.,,(Grigor; 14, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

I didn't [laughter] I only realized that at the place. I didn't know! Nobody explained arrival; Male, Russia).

And I remember the morning that we left...up. We're going to America!. And I was in the morning I was told come on we're going to... arrival; Male, Ukraine).

More significant than having the "fact" of not they actually understood its meaning. Not fully comprehending what emigration meant was the more common pattern among the Eastern European participants. Some of the participants said that no one explained anything to them.

I didn't realize that we were actually leaving that's where it hit me. I was like „Wow! arrival; Female, Ukraine).

When I started getting older and I was like what happened to him? [Father emigrated three years ago saying that we were going to be moving...when the day came that we had to leave I mean I was crying because my grandparents who were always with me I would be leaving them behind... (Katarina; 7, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

The child migrants who did not understand the significance of their journey may experience delayed emotional responses during the acculturation. For these young migrants the actual immersion in the new context without the accustomed routines, supportive relatives and friends conveyed to them over time that dramatic changes in their lives had occurred.

### *Feelings When Informed About Emigration to U.S.*

The Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students remembered strong emotions when they were informed that they would be leaving their childhood home. While there were participants who reported having feelings of happiness/excitement, unhappiness, or ambivalence, the dominant pattern in their narratives depicted mixed feelings that included at least some anxiety or being upset about the prospect of emigration (N=23; 67.6%). Comparisons by nationality indicate that the narratives on this dimension were similar. The Russian and Ukrainian child migrants that were generally enthused about the prospective journey to the U.S. described how they tried to imagine what life in America might be like. They mentioned "fantasy days" and media depictions.

Yeah I was definitely really excited about it! [laughter] Um we would have like these family fantasy days...like we would ah talk about how life would be there and I remember one specific like what my Dad was doing but that we would move to America and start ah a diner that ah would be „Peomeni which is kind of like ah Russian that you know we would start a restaurant that would sell this specifically and that I could work there and play piano and stuff and be a waitress and he would say I could make \$3 an hour and that sounded like a lot of money! [laughter]...that was really a fun fantasy but I was really excited about moving um because you know I had watched like a lot of American movies and TV shows... I remember watching *The Wonder Years* specifically. It instantly made me like American food [laughter]... (Lena; 12, Age at arrival; Female)

I felt very interested. It was kind of intriguing to what is it like America. We were told that it's a land you know of and that it's very ah beneficial not only ah benefit that we would so that and the part of immigration felt that because we would fly in the winter and me as a child I would receive on that airplane lots of ah expect as opposed to my country ah my country which is a poor country throughout history and it's a country where many serious and low poverty scale type of life...Everything is to discover you know like you want people to meet ah things to experience as in healthy things proper

things that any kind of person would enjoy... (Yuri; 10, Age Ukraine).

Luka's narrative reflects when he was informed about the local enthr journey to the U.S., and his understanding of the actual circumstances that prompted the plan for immigration.

So when the word came that we were accepted for an interview I was actually in the hospital. I had gotten hit by a bus... lucky. I was only in the hospital with a light concussion and a bruise on my head. And my Dad came to the hospital ah he told me that we were accepted for to come for an interview to Moscow... I was pretty exciting, and that was actually in ah August in Russia... (Lariva; Male, Russia). Age at

In contrast to the previous positive and neutral reactions, eight of the participants recounted that they were unequivocally unhappy about the news that they would be leaving their first country. Their narratives included concerns about their language and cultural competence and it is this reaction that is particularly relevant for school age children when we consider Erikson's depiction of this *Industry vs. Inferiority* development. Although Dimitra was only six years old she expressed being anxious about speaking English.

I wasn't very happy about it because I was the language. I remember being very frustrated because that was very different... I thought that it ever [laughter]...(Dimitra; 6, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

The following narratives illustrate the emotional component by participants that did not want to leave their first country where their lives were established and the sense of powerlessness.

Ah I wasn't happy at all...I was angry...I guess I was comfortable where I was at and I had like all of my friends around. And to experience a whole different country with a new language a new culture and everything I like really I don't know the word but ah d

of the school year too...The decision was a l  
anything that I felt that I could do...(Sergei, 9, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

Well my Dad went there and then my Mom told me that we would be moving to  
America. She told me that. I wasn't real  
because I didn't want to go. I made ever really guess it  
wanted was there so I really didn't want to  
Female; Belarus).

It wasn't really a choice in my estimation  
want to go. I didn't know the situation what was ve but I  
going on...(Arman; 10, Age at arrival; Male, Uzbekistan).

According to the participants narratives  
feelings for most of the respondents.

I was happy. I thought it would be a fresh beginning...I was kind of anxious you  
know ah it was scary. I didn't know what  
language, different culture...I guess the greatness of the United States the equal  
opportunity for everybody. Ah just to see the world. I was excited about  
that...(Dessa; 13, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

Yes, yes of course I want to go to America. So my initial reaction was yes. But I  
had my friends. I had so much there you k  
have good social standing. Why would you want to leave why?... (Calina; 12,  
Age at arrival; Female, Uzbekistan).

There was somewhat ah excitement slash fear  
English. And I had family there. So that I ha  
ah so fear was mainly for how am I going to communicate? What am I going to  
do? So, I guess emotionally that s where  
Russia).

Additionally, some of the child not fully grants  
comprehend the significance of emigration and/or were under the assumption it was a trip or  
were in disbelief.

I don't remember. I was really young then  
going on. I knew we were moving, but I really didn't understand the why  
didn't just understand I guess the hardshi  
growing up in our country. I didn't get t

school, I had friends so I couldn't really moving... (Eleni; 8, Age at arrival; Female, Uzbekistan)

I had no concept about America... (Akim; 9, Age at arrival; Male, Uzbekistan)

Oh I was excited because I would get to see seen them in two years at the airport because I really didn't know anything about it but at the coming back. It was like a trip but when I was 10, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

I didn't believe them when they told me to believe them at the airport. I didn't believe them when we were in the States. And I didn't believe here...(Adleta; 11, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

When comparing the responses at the time of departure by age 12 percent more of those ages nine through fourteen expressed feeling sad or anxious in comparison to those who were age five through eight. Even though there are certain distinctive emergent patterns related to age there are also variations even within the same household as this twin explains.

I was informed ah I remember being upset about having to leave my friends but ah I don't think I had much to say. I was pretty much told I was going to go...Ah the irony is that ah back in Moscow I had a lot of friends. My sister [twin] didn't. But she has many friends and my sister had more friends...maybe ah boys when they are young just have a lot of friends unlike girls in Russia).

### *Memories of Farewell Ceremonies and Journey to U.S.*

Good bye ceremonies serve important functions of closure—especially when the departure is anticipated to be permanent for children. The greatest majority of the Russian and Ukrainian participants remembered being able to remain in the country for a while before being asked to leave. A concern over theft, expectation to return, or for reasons they could not recall. The narratives of

the child migrants who were asked to keep their departure a secret indicated that not being able

t o s a y “ g o o d b y e ” w a s p a r t i c u l a r l y e m o t i o n a l

My parents when they finally decided that we were finally going to leave they told me not to tell anybody which is very very hard...They wanted me not to tell anybody because then people would be aware that we were leaving and then they would know that we would be moving and they worried about that it would cause people to break in and everything. And so know when I was with my friends it was ah you know hard and then I finally told my best friend and I remember she cried...you know I just had no concept of that I would be lonely or that I would be sad or 12, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

Those that discussed their feelings and thoughts at the time of departure most often expressed being “ sad ” or t h a t t h e y d i d “ n o t u n d e r s t a n d ” the implications for latent emotional reactions when children do not comprehend the significance of the uprooting initially. It was anticipated that the younger children would be among those who did not understand the import of leaving their home permanently, but there were several who were older and who were among this group of cases.

Everything was really blurry from the inception to the plane. I just remember like everything was happening so fast. You know we left everything behind...I remember everything about our apartment. I had tons and tons of blocks from during my childhood years. I used to build things. I would build hospitals, houses and fences, and now everything is gone. My Mother had these [chests] in her bedroom but because we sold everything we had these clotheslines in her bedroom that held all of our clothes. I mean it happened so fast!...I think I mean at the time I experienced a little bit of resentment like selling my toys... but I guess I was pretty sad...(Eleni; 8, Age at arrival; Female, Uzbekistan).

A d d i t i o n a l l y s o m e o f t h e s t u d e n t s d e s c r i b e others had mixed feelings that included excitement, sadness or trauma.

I remember when we got on the train to go to Moscow because we flew out of Moscow...ah you know all my relatives came to say bye and everything and me and my Mom were just crying so hard!...I think well I was more sad leaving my grandparents because I had really grown up with them. My parents were young

when they had me. They were 23. Both of them were still in college. So, I did stay with my grandparents for a lot of the (Russia.)

When the Eastern European students emigrated with extended family members, leaving their country of origin was less emotional. For instance, Fedorova emigrated with 11 family members who were the closest to her in Ukraine. Consequently, for her the entire departure was pleasant, and she stated, "... I don't remember ever brought their own support group with them to a new country.

When considering emotional states described in their narratives at the time of departure by nationality, 18 percent more Ukrainian students compared to Russian students reported being sad and/or anxious. The disparity could perhaps be partially explained by the fact that more Russian students said that they had advance notice about the plan to emigrate compared to Ukrainian students. When taking into account narratives revealed that approximately a quarter more Russian female students compared to Russian male students, and nearly the same proportion of Ukrainian females compared to Russian females experienced sad or traumatic emotions. Comparisons between Russian male students and Ukrainian male students could not be made since only four Ukrainian males were in the sample.

Another dominant pattern that emerged within the narratives was a change in mood at different stages of the departure. At times students recounted that after their farewell ceremonies with friends and family members, their sad emotional state increased to the point of trauma just before entering the plane.

I mean everybody in my class knew that I was leaving two months before so obviously they knew. And they were saying

I was excited but I also was being pulled back emotionally and ah we had family members there and my parents friends were there were leaving people that we had known most  
AND LATER

When we were at the airport I just remember this one woman like when we were walking towards the terminal and I just teared up and I was almost walking back and I was crying, „Oh no I can't do this! stay. I can't do this! ah and then my coming? We're getting I just went to the plane, and plane...(Calina; 12, Age at arrival; Female, Uzbekistan).

Contemplating their future life in the U.S. and contending with mixed emotions by participants who were children during the journey is captured in this narrative.

And I remember we were looking at the map you know oh this is America and this is how much we have to travel. This is how much is left and how many hours are left. I wasn't happy and at the same you know you will see a better life. You will see a better future know the same and I knew it wasn't going to kind of had this hope that I would come back to Ukraine and to visit my grandmother and to visit my friends when we had a chance. Ah but of course you know because of the [wait] that scared me a little bit because I was only ten years old and so my Mom told me you know you are going to start school soon. You know you will finish 5th grade and ah then I knew that I would start school ah 6th grade and ah everything will be fine. Ah  
Age of arrival; Female, Ukraine).

The collective mood about migration seemed to have shifted for the Eastern European child migrants sometime during the journey toward “happy anticipation.” newness of the process was initially positively stimulating, and that more than half of the participants narratives included a positive

I was fully aware. We were packing. We were selling everything, but I just didn't put it all together until I guess my Aunt, my Mom's sister, my godmother...she brought me my favorite toy. My cousin had big yellow duck somewhere like that. It was imported from out of the country. I loved it! It and I was really so happy! Oh God I have And she was like Ok I'm going to go back to you and I'll wave. Stand by the window and I

even realize until I saw them at the train again... I had this sinking feeling to want to leave...

AND LATER

On the plane we got this little cheese like never had seen that in a store, and then they asked if we wanted anything to drink and we all ordered Coca Cola, of course [laughter]. And we were like yes! And then you got your food and we thought it was amazing! We were like food excellent!...(Biata; 7, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

Comparisons by age indicate considerable variation within and between groups in the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students narratives. Although those who were older most often provided greater detail in their narratives that was not always the case as the following accounts indicate. Kalia did not recall saying 'bgyæo' but she does recall flying alone to the U.S. from Russia to rejoin her mother.

Oh I was so young that I don't remember and being terrified...Some people that were flying to the U.S. that were Russians that we had connected with and they were like watching over me. Ah personally I remember being like very, very alone...(Kalia; 7, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

The contrasting narratives by Adrik, Luka, and Grigor, ages 6, 12 and 14, respectively, illustrate that age of child migrants does not exclusively determine depth in recollection of a past event.

Ah I believe we flew with a big Russian airline but ah but perhaps not. In either way the airline I remember them giving out food and serving food and at the moment I thought it was distinctly American and I loved it. Ah also the stewardess went around selling ah I guess game systems at the time, and my Dad bought one for me and I was amazed by it...I thought that this was what it was going to be like [in America]...\_\_\_\_\_ [sister] and I were very close as children. So, pretty much whatever I was doing, she was doing. She was with me all the time. I guess at first anxiety, and then the [flying] sensation. We ate the food. There was excitement, a little bit of anxiety. We were because ah we were always sheltered by our parents...(Adrik; 6, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

I t w a s v e r y s u r r e a l . I t w a s v e r y s u r r e a l .  
the entire process...and what amazed me was that I could have as much juice as I  
wanted! [laughter]...So every five minutes I would run to ah the flight attendants  
and ask for juice...(Luka; 12, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

The first half of it was just talking to the person sitting next to us...she was a  
s t r a n g e r f r o m U k r a i n e ... I d o n ' t r e m e m b e r t o o  
Male, Russia).

There were seven Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students, in addition to those who  
reported having slept most of the time, who did not recall or remember the circumstances of their  
journey to the U.S. They primarily ranged in age from five through nine and one was an  
adolescent. The reasons for not having any memory or limited memory about a significant event  
could be complex, and may not be exclusively associated with chronological age. The scope of  
this study does not lend itself to a comprehensive investigation of this phenomenon. However, it  
is possible that emotional states associated with migration could influence children as is reflected  
i n K a t a r i n a s n a r r a t i v e . S h e a n d h e r m o t h e r  
father in the U.S. after a three-year absence.

S o I r e m e m b e r m y M o m w a s i n t h e f r o n t t a l k  
the journey there . L i k e I d o n t r e m e m b e r I d o n t k n  
day that we left my house when my grandparents were crying, and then I  
remember landing in America and seeing my Dad...(Katarina; 7, Age at arrival;  
Female, Ukraine).

Delayed comprehension characterized the experience for some of the participants who  
did not grasp the consequence of emigration until time had passed as the following responses  
reflect. For these child migrants the emotional reaction connected with separation from those  
they loved increased during acculturation.

I d o n t t h i n k i t r e a l l y h i t m e t h a t w e w e r  
know what I mean?...I never actually thought it would be years and years and  
years and years before I actually saw them. So for me it wa s n t a s u p s e t t i n g

my Mom but I do remember leaving at the airport you know she was crying and I didn't I don't think I really understood... (Kazakhstan).

Yuri, who was age 10 when he left Ukraine, explained that he did not realize how much he would miss his grandparents when he left. On any level of life you would take I would have grandparents. And for 10 years at all I love them I didn't and that's why I value them much more. I know probably with a very big regret that I will not see them. I mean I would miss them much more than I did at ten years old. I mean I wasn't much aware of who I'm leaving... (Yuri; 10, Age at arrival;

### *First Impressions of the U.S.*

The Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students by different things when they landed in the U.S., and some talked about several aspects that impressed them. Most often they discussed the sights in the U.S. upon arrival and/or compared them with the images that they had seen in their first country. When the visual fit their expectations there was excitement, but if not they expressed disappointment. Those that did not have any preconceived ideas described how they reacted to their new surroundings.

I was expecting to come to America and see these skyscrapers that I saw on TV so I was very very excited at arrival; Male, Russian; 2y

We were driving from the airport. There were a lot of lights! You know the night view from Philadelphia... it's like lights like there were just big bridges you know!... We actually arrived on Thanksgiving I think. It was the day of Thanksgiving... (An Kazakhstan).

When we actually came to America when we came to the apartments that my Uncle rented for us I sat in the car and said where are we? Like I was literally shocked to find out that this is where we were going to live... where all the Russians lived [instead of New York city] arrival; Female, Ukraine).

I think I was a little here I was kind of but ah I knew that thought it was kind of a neat place. So k anything and so I was kind of ah pretty scared. I also remember like a supermarket going there with my Mom and like she told me about the shopping cart . . . we didn't have anything like that in (Male, Russia).

Some of the respondents made other comparisons between their first country and the U.S.

For example, not having seen an ocean before in contrast to the seas in Ukraine, and the large distances between locations was intriguing to the newly-arrived children from Eastern Europe.

For Jelena, seeing the Statue of Liberty and assuming an important role of translator for the family at the airport stands out in her memory.

We landed in JFK...We landed very late. It was very dark and you know New York ah we went to Brooklyn and ah there were a lot of people outside. It was you know light everywhere and I saw the Statue of Liberty but I saw it from the plane. That was kind of cool...I was the only one who spoke English so you know when we got off the plane for ah security and stuff I remember I felt really cool cause I was the eight-year-old asking directions for my entire family!...(Jelena; 8, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

Meeting close family and friends at the airport was discussed frequently, and the participants described the warm welcome they received. Many had relatives who had made arrangements for their living quarters or who had invited them to initially stay with them.

My uncle, my mother's sister, at JFK...She [Aunt] of bananas and said, „Why don't you take some doing? They are so expensive. hey And she said are very cheap. Why don't you just take some „Bananas! . . . We all each had one banana and it tasted so good! And I don't remember I had a stomach ache. I was home sick I think... (Biata, 7, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

My Dad met us...and then we ah got a car and Park and the next day was Christmas...we had like other Russian people living here and so we just went over to their house and just celebrated Christmas with them...just everything was really nice. Like the stores always had a lot of

everything in them...Like you have what you need there but there aren't any choices...(Alexis; 10, Age at arrival; Female, Belarus).

Yuri recounted how his Uncle, who had sponsored his family, greeted them at the New York airport. He expressed gratitude for the abundance of food and clothing that was available as well as the extensive sports and sports equipment to choose from in the U.S. Yet, there were participants who had profound experiences initially at the airport after separation from parents for extended periods of time. In the first flight from Russia and anticipating seeing her mother whom she had not been with for a year. However, after the traumatic moments, she also describes the excitement of traveling with her mother and seeing the new sights in America.

I was getting off and I was walking out ah and they had these sliding doors and I was terrified because I just knew that my mother would not recognize me and I wouldn't be able to find her so... I saw her opened and then they closed again...I remember being so shocked and terrified like she was gone! The door was closed and like I was not ever going to see her again!...

AND

I was also excited!...I remember ah when we were first like driving from the airport in America and we passed ah Boat House Row with all of the lights, and I was just like shocked! I was so amazed that there were so many lights and it was so beautiful... (Kalia; 7, Age at arrival; Female)

And the second respondent, Katarina, who was also seven years old at the time, described how she did not recognize her father at the airport since she had not seen him for three years.

I didn't recognize him at first. I went to... Look there's Dad. Cause I mean I didn't see so many people coming off our plane and I was like I just stood there, and...she turned around and she pointed to that direction. And I walked up to this man [laughter]...but ah but for the longest time for maybe first nine months when I first came I couldn't like I wasn't like afraid of him... (Katarina; 7, Age of arrival; Female, U.S.)

Several students expressed their amazement at the availability of products in the stores and/or new food experiences.

I mean I just remember being little and like living there and...I just appreciate America so much more than you can hardly imagine coming to this country like my Mom almost lost her mind [laughter]. She walked into this supermarket and she had a whole row of meat that she could buy with like a dozen brands!...And for bread what do you mean what kind of bread? You mean there is more than one kind of bread? . . . She couldn't handle it [laughter]. She couldn't handle anything!...(Markov; 6, Age at arrival; Male, Ukraine).

However, a few of the respondents talked about becoming sick from the food because they were unaccustomed to it and/or the combination of food and riding in a car for the first time.

I remember when we first came over ah I do remember I had orange tictacs like for the first time...And staying with family at first and then I remember I guess we didn't have it over in Kiev and think I ended up eating too much candy and then I threw up [laughter]...(Katya; 5, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

Manhattan looked like a small island and you know when we landed it was just so big! It really was. I was really surprised at the size but in addition to that on the drive I realized that I wasn't doing so well with the car I guess because I threw up in the car really interesting because it was my Uncle's rent a car. I remember listening outside not in the car not in here...(Arman; 10, Age at arrival; Male, Uzbekistan).

The child migrants narratives also included "humid" weather that they had never experienced.

I remember being hot when we landed when we came outside [laughter] and ah one of my Dad's friends that you know had a company that already had been there for a year already they came to meet us and there was a picture and I got just a little bit hot!...Yeah I mean it is hot in the summers in Russia, but I think it was maybe even in the 90s here or something...(Ilina; 9, Age of arrival; Female, Russia).

And for those that had not been outside of Eastern Europe before, they were struck by the racial diversity in general and by the large numbers of African American people specifically that they saw upon arrival in New York City. Several had never seen a black person prior to emigration and were captivated by the fact that a person could have a color other than white.

I remember my first impression ah of in Mo African Americans or any people from Africa...maybe one or two but here there was a lot more...I mean I knew I was going to be...surrounded by people of different kinds of nationalities...now you States... (Ivan; 11, Age at arrival; Male, Ru

We landed in New York yeah and that was actually the first time I had ever seen an African American person. It was this big security lady... because I had never seen a black person before. Ahh I just remember that and then I was really tired and so I started crying you know and my Mom told me to be quiet to stop crying...We already got off the plane and we were in the transfer area and at the transfer area I started crying too and my Mom said stop crying and that was it...that is what I remember... (Vad

Several of the Ukrainian and Russian participants that arrived in the U.S. during the post-Communist at times felt particularly out of place in the U.S. since they had not been taught about the history of capitalistic systems. And others commented on how studying English in their first country did not prepare them for the actual communication in the U.S.

I was at that point I was shocked by everything that was going on around me it was essentially culture shock...The most difficult part was that no matter how well you study a foreign language of a different country when you actually get into the new society you know the new country with like you don't know nothing... In terms of really don't believe that not like the real life thing that experience...(Grigor; 14, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

The Eastern European child migrants narra world they were entering and the world they had just left during their childhood and the potential adjustments they may be required to make. Their narratives of what stood out most in their

memories about their first impressions and/or experiences reflected a range of observations about those differences as well as aspects of family reunification. The crucible of migration is transformative in ways specific to children of the age group considered herein. The emotional component of this major change can be discerned in the narratives of attachments connected with the country of origin.

### *What the Child Migrants Missed Upon Arrival*

Soon after arrival the Eastern European child migrants began to comprehend the permanency of this move and began the nostalgic phase of missing what they had left behind. Within their narratives they identified those things in their former country that they were attached to and their longings of those things they held dear. The participants who were age nine through twelve years old at the time of departure named 25 percent more aspects of endearment in comparison to the younger cohort who were age five through eight. Attachments for family members left behind was mentioned by 31 (91.2%) of the participants nearly equally divided between Russian and Ukrainian students.

I do remember missing my family a lot...We wrote to each other. We kept in touch until they arrived... (Akim; 9, Age of

Separation from friends was also painful for many of the participants, and typically they attempted to stay connected.

I liked it there because I had friends there. They were actually my ethnic background. I did miss them when I came over here and I was crying about them... (Larisa; 7, Age at arrival; Female, U

More of the Ukrainian participants compared to Russian participants talked about missing the landscape, hospitality of people, and the open green spaces where children were free to play.

They would just welcome you with open arms like when we dropped of the bread  
 it was like oh come on in hang out with us  
 thank s for coming over but do you want to ea  
 to have you . It wasn t like that . Like t  
 environment . They you know like it was a  
 Ukraine).

I left at the time where I had my friends established I had my life established there  
 I knew kind of like I had so many friends and this is green, this is our territory this  
 is like where we live and then it completely crashed...(Adleta; 11, Age at arrival;  
 Female, Ukraine).

In addition to the happy socialization exp  
 positive perspective of the political orientation during her childhood in the post-Communist era.

I remember things that happened to me in Ukraine like ah friends, and parties, and  
 family outings, and going to the beach...summer ah going to our summer home I  
 had friends there. And I was so in love with Lenin who taught us Communism.  
 We went to see him . We went to see Lenin  
 Age of arrival; Female, Ukraine).

In addition to friends, family, values, and landscape, their narratives depicted fondness  
 for their schools, neighborhood, life style, culture, and traditions. Some of the participants  
 expressed regret for having to leave “ behind y t h i n g ”

I mean I remember being very upset ah because I had to leave absolutely  
 everything behind ah...I definitely had forged a pretty strong connection with my  
 aunt and I definitely remember that I missed her... (Kalia; 7, Age at arrival;  
 Female, Russia).

I think I was sad that I had to leave school. I mean I finished my first year but I  
 knew that I wouldn't be back for first grade. I think that was a little disappointing  
 because I would miss my female Ukraine).. ( Inessa , 6

Overall , the participants narratives illu  
 connected with emigration. Dominant patterns that emerged on this dimension will be  
 summarized in the following discussion.

### *Discussion*

The Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students' narratives about their attachments, immigration process, farewell ceremonies, the journey, and first impressions after arriving in the U.S. characterize in important ways what was salient for them as children in the emigration process. Overall, the emigration process and childhood uprooting experiences convey the powerlessness of children in life-changing events, and the emotional import that is specific to childhood migration. Their participation in the decision-making phase of leaving their first country was rarely sought, and when offered a choice it was either to go with their parents or stay behind with a relative. Moreover, parents would employ tactics to entice children to emigrate with them by offering material rewards. Being unprepared for this major life change was another prominent theme with children often not understanding the significance of the move to the U.S. In addition, contending with keeping "secrets" about the journey and the farewell ceremonies that could have been instrumental in preparing them for separation from their extended kin, friends and home life.

Participant emotional states when they were child migrants reflect individual circumstances and represent a range of emotions at the time of departure. However, a common theme of being taken by surprise, by feelings of powerlessness about the adult decisions, emotional confusion and sadness over anticipated loss emerged across the interviews. Of those who discussed their feelings and thoughts at the time of leaving, the dominant themes were feeling sad and not fully understanding the significance of emigration. Once they began their journey, more reported that they started to feel happy anticipation about coming to the U.S.

Nonetheless, despite these compensating expectations about an improved exciting new life, the participants also recounted that they had serious concerns and worries about the new life that would begin once they descended the plane which would be in a foreign country, culture and language. Although their narratives were frequently nuanced and complex, there were also patterns that emerged in the emigration process that were associated to gender and/or nationality, and age at departure. Sad or traumatic emotions were more often reported by Ukrainian students, females in general, and the older child migrants.

In what ways might the emigration experiences be different or similar for children and adults based on the participants narratives? making and executing the emigration plan as well as caring for minor children during the process. However, both immigrant adults and children experience emigration, and they may contend differentially with the emotional import of leaving behind what is familiar. There may also be different types of attachments for adults and children as well as different sentiments and emotions associated with the departure. Nonetheless, these young participants described a range of emotions and experiences that congealed around themes of loss and disruption such as regrets about leaving, losing established intimacies with extended kin, losing what is familiar, separation from family and friends, English language challenges, and general concerns over the new life awaiting them in the U.S.

A major difference in the children's experience is linked to the powerlessness of children during the uprooting process from familiar surroundings. Although several participants expressed that their parents included them in the decision-making process, and some were given an opportunity to choose to emigrate or remain in

their first country, in most cases they were merely informed that they would be leaving. In some instances, they were informed just prior to departure. Consequently, they did not have time to internalize the significance of moving to a foreign country nor did they have an opportunity to say “bgyœo”d to family and friends. These experiences even trauma linked to cultural uprooting and severance from all that they held dear coupled with concerns about their future in an unfamiliar country. Early childhood scholars have found that if disruption of developmental stages occurs and/or trauma is experienced during primary socialization it could affect the individual throughout life. For these reasons, the enduring memories of the emigration events as they unfolded for these participants during childhood could influence their evolving personhood. However, there is an added layer of complexity specific to disruption of childhood developmental stages as a result of migration since the manifested effects may be distinctive in comparison to other types of disruptions.

These findings cast doubt on the commonly-held view that young immigrant children are similar to American-born children given their years of assimilation in the U.S., and that they have comparable experiences with children who have moved during childhood to another part of America. American-born children who move to different locations within the U.S. do have in common with immigrant children such experiences as leaving behind all that is familiar, missing family members and friends, and beginning their lives in a new neighborhood and school. But for immigrant children who must simultaneously contend with these changes in a new language, different culture, and within contexts where their foreign status experience a distinctive emotional acculturation. Consequently, the Eastern European child migrates from country of origin, and forsaking that life for life in

willingly or unwillingly for a new beginning in the U.S. underscores the standpoint that they are immigrants in their own right although with less agency and the adult compensations that many immigrants have of taking control of their own destiny. In critical ways the narratives of the participants contradict the standpoints articulated in the literature that the immigration experiences are not relevant for young children. Instead, this investigation indicates that the migration events and connected emotions for children within the vulnerable developmental stage may have potential consequences apart from mobility outcomes typically measured. The participants' narratives from African communities and transition and schools shed light on challenges specific to children. Although parents typically face difficult challenges during the transition, children enter different peer contexts of reception in their schools and neighborhoods that present a unique set of obstacles to overcome. Many of the immigrant children we observe here have gone through a largely silent stage of bewilderment and often contended with culture shock alone in the world of new peers. Negotiating different peer contexts of reception in a new cultural context typically without their parents may leave an emotional legacy that may lead to different adaptation pathways. In the next chapter we focus on the emotional acculturation of the child migrants during their migration transitions within their first U.S. neighborhoods and schools.

## CHAPTER 5

### CHILDHOOD MIGRATION TRANSITIONS

*This one famous Jewish writer I forgot his name wrote that to change addresses in the same city is like changing [from] a tee-shirt to a dress shirt. You have to adapt a little to its size but going from one country to another is like being born again. You have to learn the language. You have to learn the customs, the culture, the traditions, the holidays, how people act. You have to adapt to certain curiosity. It was something that we appreciated and were waiting for with overcome...(Yuri; 10, Age at arrival; Male, Ukraine).*

Most of the Russian and Ukrainian child migrants who understood the significance of emigration had at least some anxiety about leaving their familiar way of life and concerns over what their future would hold in the U.S. Change was inevitable and they attempted to project what it might be like living in America, but most of them were not prepared for the type of changes that occurred and initially contended with culture shock. Typically when immigrants arrive and settle in the U.S. they “. . . usually undergo which leads to alterations in the person some adaptation these alterations may improve or worsen (Rothe, Tsuang, and Pumariega, 2010:682). For children undergoing migration and acculturation during vulnerable childhood developmental stages there are additional implications for their adjustment. The discontinuity in the selves formed in their familiar environment and responses by others in the U.S context during their transitions has implications for their sense that the inner sameness and continuity prepared in the past are matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meaning (Erikson, 1963:261). hers...”

Bourdieu's (*Habitus*) illuminates the circumstances of migrant children; when the ability to "anticipate" has been limited by formation and adaptation trajectories.

Habitus, a particular but constant way of entering into a relationship with the world which contains a knowledge enabling it to anticipate the course of the world, is immediately present, without any objectifying distance, in the world and itself there to be seen, felt and expected: it is capable of mastering it by providing an adequate response, having a hold on it, in hand ... (Bourdieu, 2000: 142).

Rather than feeling in harmony with their world and having the internalized tools to comfortably master their "field" immigrant children which they have not been prepared. Confidence gained through their interaction within their first environment is commonly eroded in the obscure and often inhospitable social context. The dispositions with which they arrive determine to a meaningful extent how they respond, actualize, and define themselves in a new environment.

...Habitus as a system of dispositions to be which, in a certain way, seeks to create the conditions of its fulfillment, and therefore to create the conditions most favorable to what it is. In the absence of any major upheaval (a change of position, for example), the conditions of its formation are also the conditions of its realization. But, in any case, the agent does what is in his power to make possible the actualization of the potentialities inscribed in his body in the form of capacities and dispositions shaped by conditions of existence. And a number of behaviors can be understood as efforts to maintain or produce a state of the social world or of a field that is capable of giving to some acquired disposition... the potentialized... (Bourdieu, 2000: 150).

Emigration for children is a "major upheaval" selecting potentially useful tools acquired in the first home, discarding others, and consciously acquiring cultural and linguistic skills to actualize their potentialities that were beginning to be

shaped in their first homes. This endeavor characterizes the challenges confronted by the foreign-born children and thereby in significant ways differentiates this population from the native-born American children of immigrant parents. Immigrant children are confronted with having to make numerous emotional and cognitive adjustments within a new cultural and linguistic context (Igoa, 1995). Despite these essential differences in experience between the foreign-born and native-born American children in immigrant homes, these two segments of the population are often considered as one population group by researchers interested in child outcomes. In part this practice has been perpetuated since there is not consensus about at what age the culture and language of origin has exerted a lasting influence on the child. As has been discussed in Chapter One, researchers have responded by creating a number of different generational categories to group immigrant children based on their particular perspective on this issue (Jensen, 2001; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters, and Holdaway, 2008; López and Stanton-Salazar, 2001; Min, 2002; Portes and Rumbaut, 2001; Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco, 2001; Zéphir, 2001; Zhou, 2001; Zhou and Bankston, III, 1998). Assumptions are made about the ages immigrant children are influenced by their own experiences and young immigrant children are routinely viewed as native-born American children. These methodologies, however, are increasingly being questioned and arguments are being made for considering the foreign-born children as a separate group (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco, 2001). When Rumbaut disaggregated the data taking into account age at arrival, life stages and socio-developmental contexts he found variations between the foreign-born and native-born children (Rumbaut in Portes and DeWind, 2007:345). Recommendations were made for further empirical

investigations about the foreign-born children since their actual migration experiences and the effects of those events have not been sufficiently examined.

Immigrant children's voices shed light on the relevancy of their own experiences in their country of origin and their integration experiences in the U.S. neighborhoods and schools. The Eastern European students in this sample arrived at various ages during childhood, and through their narratives we are able to consider from their perspectives to what degree their migration experiences impacted their adaptation pathways, self-identifications and the emotional import of these events. Although research has focused on migrant children's areas as education and mobility patterns, the emotional acculturation of migrant children undergoing major upheavals have not been adequately considered. Herein we will discuss the patterns that emerged in their narratives of acculturation, incorporation and the emotions expressed about these changes. Then, in Chapters Six and Seven we will make assessments about their identity formation and adaptation on the university campus in association with the student transition.

## **Section 1: Home and Neighborhood**

### ***Changes in Household Compositions, Family Roles and Responsibilities***

Disruptions of accustomed routines for children are commonly unsettling, and they undermine their sense of security if the changes are dramatic. We will first discuss the alterations associated with migration within consider their emotional reactions to those changes.

Immigrant children contend with a host of different changes simultaneously within private and public spheres (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco, 2001; Zhou and Bankston, III,

1998), and the manner in which these alterations in their lives occur can evoke emotional responses that have implications for their development (Hoffman, 1989; Marcos, 1982; Toppelberg and Collins, 2010). Since the family typically is pivotal for the socialization and nurturing of young children, we begin by considering the impact of emigration on the family. Of the 34 Eastern European students, 20 (58.8%) reported that there were changes in the constitution of their families; eleven became smaller, seven became larger, and for two the size remained the same but the make up of the family altered. On this dimension there was a striking difference between the national groups. In contrast to the Russian students, the Ukrainian students had much greater stability in household compositions when they arrived in the U.S. since two thirds of the families remained the same (66.7%). That is, fifteen out of nineteen households altered for the Russian child migrants in comparison to five of the fifteen Ukrainian families. Divorce or death of parents just before or after emigration were given as primary reasons for household disruption. In addition to these difficult family structural changes a third of the participants reported that when they arrived in the U.S. their new living arrangements were either cramped, stressful, and/or an unwelcoming. Changed circumstances in the constitution of the family and/or living arrangements may elicit emotions in children, but when the alteration reflects a movement from a comfortable home to an uninviting one there are additional

c o n n o t a t i o n s   f o r   c h i l d r e n   s   e m o t i o n a l   w e l l   b e

It was only a one-bedroom place. One bedroom...apartment and there were seven of us! There was no space and the house was not clean and I think my Mom was like a very clean person...she was like always stressed out and they would never help us. It was sad because they never really helped us ah we d i d n t   h a v e   a n y   m o n e y   a n d   w e   c o u l d n t   s p e a k   t h e   l a n g u a g e   a   there...(Andreea; 9, Age at arrival; Female, Kazakhstan).

A common theme emerged in their accounts of missing close extended family members that were left behind in Eastern Europe. While the new nuclear family structure was assessed as beneficial by a few of the participants because of their consciousness about the smaller family size especially when they were only children. There were also four Russian and four Ukrainian students that found that their first living arrangements were especially comfortable in the U.S. since the entire family unit was transplanted from Eastern Europe, they lived near grandparents, or they had a support system.

The socioeconomic status and social capital that immigrants bring with them influence their opportunities in the U.S. (Kibria, 1998; Myers, 2003), and they determine the extent to which parents can provide for their children during the period of adaptation (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001). The Eastern European immigrants, half of the respondents arrived in the U.S. with few resources in terms of material or monetary possessions and nine came without any resources. These families typically began working at low-paying jobs, and several received supports from relatives, sponsors and/or religious and government agencies. Limited resources for them because they could not dress like their mainstream peers which is important in social interaction during acculturation. The remaining six participants described that their families had moderate or substantial resources when entering the U.S., and they were predominately from Russia.

The sense of predictability and concomitant security that children have in their lives is intimately woven within role expectations of family members. When the participants were asked if there were any changes in family roles and responsibilities in their first U.S. homes, over half said that changes did occur but sixteen (47.1%) of the participants expressed that while there

were changes some things remained the same. Typically, family members replicated the domestic patterns and their responsibilities within the home as they had been in their country of origin, but their roles and responsibilities outside of the home altered in the U.S. context. A common pattern described by the students was the downward mobility of parents in employment opportunity related to lack of English proficiency and the stress that the parents experienced over the status change. In Dimitra's narrative she described her parents' intensive work in their perception as having been part of the struggle as a young child, and this dimension will be considered in greater detail later.

Yeah so we didn't know any English and they b  
 We worked on holidays, and we wouldn't hav  
 parents were always working, they were always tired and I was always there after  
 school and I really have friends because I was always there at the bakery  
 after school...(Dimitra; 6, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

Another employment trend in two-parent homes was for one parent to work at a comparable job in the U.S., especially when they were recruited, while the other was relegated to more than one low-paying job. The work demands on the parents required immigrant children to contribute within the household. Although assisting with household chores is not exclusively found among child migrants, the abruptness in change in the nature of expectations and the type of responsibilities are linked in significant ways to immigration and acculturation. Luka described how he and his sister had to learn responsible at a younger age than most people. "of family translator (Orellana, 2009), and this new role was frequently reported by the

participants who assisted parents with formal verbal and written communication in the adult world and navigating systems on their own.

Here it's a little bit different. Since I go to school and have a good education as always...I learned English faster than they did. ~~My mother understands a lot when I speak to her in English, but it's hard for her to speak. Especially when we first moved here she wasn't able to help me with any school work my own and...then I learned everything on my own. I didn't ask them for any help and you know she felt bad about it. She doesn't have to understand the language...But it was definitely different and hard!...~~(Eleni, 8, Age at arrival; Female, Uzbekistan).

Another element that gives children a sense of predictability is the nature of activities that they engage in routinely, and they are contingent on cultural norms and/or socio economic status.

The abrupt switch from immersion in structured activities to not having any extracurricular activities can be unsettling for children—especially in an unfamiliar country where the parents do not know the system. Children who find themselves in these altered circumstances not only lose the opportunities for cognitive stimulation but also become socially isolated. For example, whereas Adrik at age six attended music and chess school in Russia, in the U.S. he recalled being “bored” because he ~~et evd a st oe s“swa nt tc ih ai ln lgy t re el le vgi s i o n s o n g s ”~~ that did not hold any meaning for him.

The transformation of lives linked to immigration commonly affects the amount as well as the nature of time spent with their parents which has significant connotations for family relationships. Frequently the participants talked about either having had less time or more time with parents in the U.S. depending on their job schedule. When they were not accustomed to being alone—especially as only children—it was an adjustment as well as a new responsibility. However, when participants emigrated with intact families that included extended kin the

benefits were significant during the critical transitional period since they provided continuity for children, supports during economic downturn, and child care services that enabled parents to attend English classes. These positive outcomes associated with extended family systems have been identified among immigrant groups (Kasi). In one case, a grandmother had emigrated before her and was able to assist with the English language and homework assignments when she entered the American schools. Her case also serves as an example of how generational acculturation does not always follow the anticipated path with children being more acculturated within immigrant families (Telzer, 2011).

Clinicians have found that "... the process that result from the process typically undergo acculturation variably which may threaten family bonds (Rothe, Tzuang, Pumariega, 2010:686).

Most of the participants focused on learning English as quickly as possible even when the first language and culture was also retained in the home. In a few instances the parents actively encouraged assimilation and preferred that their children speak English. That was the circumstance for Inessa where her parents were and they "jumped at the opportunity to be roles and adapt a family can take different forms in part because of this transformational context but it is also contingent on factors such as age at arrival, cultural orientation, values, and belief systems of family members.

### ***Relationship Changes after Emigration***

Stability of relationships between parents and children is an anchor during upheavals, but a third of the participants narratives reflect

directly linked with the emigration process, and most described negative changes. However, three participants said that they enjoyed the improvement in relationships with family members, and for one participant the change in relationship was initially positive but regressed over time.

For those who had experienced negative relationship changes during the acculturation and integration phase, their narratives often reflected an emotional response. Less time with parents because of the hardships in working low-paying jobs was a common theme, and these alterations

in patterns changed the “behavior and character” of the participants who did not receive sufficient attention in childhood. When Katarina and her mother joined her father after a three-year absence, her father seemed like a “stranger” to her. Katarina felt strained. This respondent gave the following account with much emotion indicative of frustration, disappointment, and unresolved resentment toward her father who did not parent her from age three to seven due to the migration history, but is present for her American-born younger sister's developmental years.

So like me and him have never like had a good connection like he has with my sister because I didn't see him like he has with my father like relationship... Like with my sister different experience for him... That period was seven... and he's like, „Oh my gosh like I don't remember that! Cause you weren't there!... I was out then all of a sudden I'm with my Dad. So (Katarina; 7, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

Adleta explained that her younger twin siblings easily related to their father in the new interactive role developed in the U.S. context whereas she and her older brother were unaccustomed to it.

They talk to my Dad as if they're best friends. They talk to him with respect you know that he's the authority. So something you better watch it because he's

Before [in Ukraine] my Dad always worked... I my sisters were born where it was my Mom sitting on the bench and me and my Dad and my brother playing soccer in the yard with a whole bunch of kids...cause my Dad left early and came home late or he would travel a lot...[In the U.S.] I just turned 12. It was in 2000, and ah he told me you can't stay out late not o'clock in the morning. There are curfews back to him, and that was the last time for to tell me what to do? male, Ukraine. dleta; 11, Age

Forging a new way of life in America as a nuclear family gave Biata an opportunity to get to know her own parents better, but it a father had been a successful engineer in Ukraine who went on business trips routinely, in the U.S. he was at home often because of underemployment. The downward mobility impacted her father's sense of self negatively, and at the of the family which was contested by the participant and other female members of the family. The variable of gender in migration is critical in understanding the phenomenon of family dynamics in this process (Grasmuck and Pessar illustrates how the new context in the U.S. shifted power relationships within the family dynamic that initially was advantageous. His father had been well connected with political figures and with the KGB, and he used his influence to assist many people for which he was publicly honored. However, within their patriarchal his children, and his behavior was at times a divorce him in the U.S.

He wasn't supposed to be a father... Like he never definitely helped provide for us. We were actually able to get some stuff that other families didn't... Also, he didn't treat my hit her... So that was new to gain divorce him... But in America all of a sudden it was a fresh start. My Dad was out of his element. He was in a new place. He had no language you know. He was brought down to like a much lower level... So to rely on except for social he had

of a sudden he became like a good father a living in America he sort of went back to at arrival; Male, Ukraine).

Strain between family members in the household occurred in a few instances when they lived with extended kin and/or others. Furthermore, connecting with new parent figures is often challenging but during acculturation and integration it added to the complexities of the child m i g r l i v e s w h e n they had to adapt simultaneously to new stepparents.

Although the narratives of the participants stressed the many negative familial changes and associated emotions, immigration can also foster positive relationships with parents and siblings when their interactions increased and/or they shared similar aspirations as immigrants.

To illustrate, whereas during the first nine her daily routines independently, in the U.S. she enjoyed talking to her mother after school every day since her mother did not work outside of the home initially.

### ***Feelings about Changes in the Home during the Transition***

The changes that immigrant youth experience during the period of acculturation within their families have prevalently been discussed in relationship to the generational acculturation gaps observed between family members. What is essentially missing in the conversation is the emotional responses to acculturation by young immigrant children. While there were eight participants whose narratives indicated that they had completely positive feelings about the changes, and some had mixed or neutral responses, almost two thirds (N=22) of the participants expressed that they had negative feelings about the changes in their homes that occurred as a result of immigration. The predominant negative themes within their narratives dealt with separation from their first homes, the stress of being the family translator, feeling rapidly pushed

out of childhood and parental dependence, confinement and isolation within the home related to new responsibilities, inability to communicate, not having structured extracurricular activities, and decrease in socioeconomic status.

Immigrant adolescents have been found to be impacted by their altered way of life in a new country, and children are not anticipated to have similar responses (Kosof, 1996). In contrast, the narratives of the child migrants who participated in this study often reflect dramatic reactions to these changes and which are consistent with the observations made by clinicians who counsel and treat children. Separation from those things that they held dear in their childhood home of origin and simultaneously contending with loneliness in an unfamiliar environment produced homesickness and depression. The American Psychiatric Association defines homesickness as an “adjustment disorder” describing its defining psychological as recurrent cognitions that are focused on home (e.g., house, loved ones, homeland, home cooking, returning home), and the precipitating stressor is always an anticipated or actual separation. While pediatricians assist in the prevention and treatment of homesickness in children, including refugee and immigrant children, not any of the participants who were affected emotionally by the separation from their first home had a medical intervention. Instead, they coped on their own primarily by staying inside, watching TV, and being alone since their parents had to work hard often at several jobs. Biata, who arrived at age seven, did not want to eat, was depressed and constantly asked her father, “When will I go home?” and Elenir, who was a year older upon arrival, describes her isolation in the U.S.

I came here at a young age and you know I didn't have any American friends and I was just down on myself...and I really just stayed by myself...I stayed in after

school a lot and watched TV all day. I learned my Mom told me how to speak because she had this big television. And once I started understanding English I think that may have helped. (Age at arrival; Female, Uzbekistan).

The intensity of homesickness and the elation when returning for a visit to Russia is captured in Grigor's account.

Well that first year was very, very difficult in terms of the homesickness. So the first year I went back was I can't even describe it. You know I just went back to what I knew because back in America everything was just still very new to me... (Grigor; 14, female).  
 I left her home at age eight, and she brought me here" because "I didn't know anything about it... I like to see her but I don't have an understanding of the significance of immigration when they left their home the permanence of that decision began to have an impact in the new context, and the sense of loss and separation was profound.

I never thought exactly that I would be leaving them forever I mean I never thought about having to give up my friends then when we came here ah I think there was a game that played that kinda made me remember how my friends were in Ukraine and how I couldn't really make friends in America at first. I was played I would sit there and cry... (Larisa, female, Ukraine).

Homesickness for their way of life, family and friends were enhanced when they could not connect with peers. Overall, the Russian and Ukrainian transitions within their homes coupled with homesickness for their familiar way of life was for the most part a stressful and emotional experience especially for two participants whose parents died before emigration.

### *The Shared Immigrant Struggle*

Eastern European foreign-born students recall the struggle that they shared with their parents in different ways. While in certain respects their narratives may reflect typical responsibilities of children with younger siblings in the home, there were aspects associated with their experience that are distinctive challenges for immigrant children. For example, the isolation in the home with their younger siblings impeded a few of the Eastern European students from socializing with their peers and/or be able to engage in extracurricular school activities which are crucial for integration.

I just remember we were still you know my parents were working those jobs and  
 a h I w a s n o t w o r k i n g o u t s i d e o f s c h o o l b e c a  
 you know I would be watching my little brother and screaming my head off  
 ... a n d i t w a s j u s t l i k e Y o u n e c o u l d n o t w r o e a s l t l y t i g n  
 you could but it just like the whole commu  
 did go outside I found it to be really ugly and it sort of had a wall made out of  
 b r i c k ... ( C a l i n a , 1 2 , A g e a t a r r i v a l ; F e m a l e ,

Several of their narratives focused on the sudden end of childhood because they had to navigate unfamiliar environments alone during the phase of acculturation since their parents did not know the U.S. structures and while simultaneously entering the adult world on behalf of their parents. During the dialogue about those circumstances some of the participants expressed that while they understood why their parents could not fulfill their parental role in the way they would have in their country of origin, they still regretted this fundamental change in the parent-child relationship.

Y e a h t h e y d i d n o t k n o w h o w t o s u p p o r t m e ... S o  
 of became the place where I had to seek them [activities] out or teachers found  
 out that I could so something...in fact it kind of it increased my independence  
 b e c a u s e I w a s a b l e t o l e a r n E n g l i s h a l o t  
 then started to rely on me to translate things or I did things for them or make  
 phone calls which I found ah I was really struggling with that. I still wanted them

to be parents. I wanted to be the kid. I dealing with like with answering phones to (Lena; 12, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

Adrik was just six years old when he came with his family to the U.S, and he provides important insights about the distinction between cognitively learning about how to fit into the American culture without his p that would have a s s i s t a occurred in Moscow with the guidance of his parents.

They would have helped me transition more from ah being protected to going out there and actually experience Moscow versus here I had to really do that on my own. Not only were they busy they had no idea w h a t ( c i t y ) w a s r e a l l y I would have fit in a lot more with Russians because my parents would have taught me. In America I have to try to take it on myself to explore all the things that make America what likæ music,literatureAh but it s art, TV shows versus had I been in Russia I would have been exposed to this naturally through my parents. I t w o u l d n t It would have felt like oh this is what I remembered growing up on this ah it would have been essentially just a more natural process experiencing the culture...(Adrik, 6, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

Throug h A d r i k s a c c o u n t w e c a n d i s c e r n t h e c r culture for their young children, and when the parents lose their expertise in cultural transmission within the foreign U.S. context, young children are left ungrounded. That is, whereas the children s u n d e r s t a n d i n g o f c u l t u r a i n t h e y o n v e n t i now must make a concerted cognitive effort to forge ahead on their own and learn about the new world they have entered.

Acculturation and integration experiences by immigrant students from Eastern Europe cannot always be readily categorized as easy or difficult. Sometimes there were mixed experiences with a salient component that continues to resonate as was the case when Andreea went to a Russian- s p e a k i n g c a m p . W i t h i n A n d r e e a s n a r r a

sacrificed to provide stimulating activities for their children because it is a cultural value, but at

the camp she was ostracized by “English speaking

Even though there were people who did speak they ah you know left out of the group. The cool people to be were the English speaking people. Nobody like cool because the majority...were American. Speaking to me would be just like ah you know talking to the awkward person...I guess when I came here and you know and I didn't speak the same language as they are!...I was so lost. It was awful... (Andre Kazakhstan).

In another case, Inessa described that she had internalized the immigrant struggle, accepted their low socio-economic status, and never wanted to place any stress on her parents by asking them to buy something for her. Consequently, even though Inessa had excelled musically she did not even explore continuing music instruction in her new school out of concern that the lessons in this context would not be free. She expressed that she “sort things” and she at her parents worked two jobs during the transition and saved in order to purchase a house.

Absence of fathers in the lives of children has generally been associated with negative outcomes (Kasinitz, et al, 2008). The absence of a father as a result of divorce during the transition had a major impact on Ivan who arrived at age 11 with his parents and twin sister. Not having a father present as a child moves toward adolescence has its own implications, and growing up in a new cultural context adds unique challenges that were manifested in additional stress. In Ivan's situation, he as a male was given formerly assumed in the household, and he assisted his mother with all matters requiring English even though his sister was the same age.

Akim, who emigrated at age nine with his mother, had to adapt to a less rigorous way of life, contend with his feelings of separation from his extended family, and the ultimate familial disruption related to his stepfather's aggression toward his mother and their temporary homelessness and living in a shelter. The emotional import of these experiences during acculturation seems to have exacted a toll on him.

R. It was my mother, stepfather, and me ... I mean I was ah I guess I do remember a big part of that family dynamic...From what I remember she [mother] took some time off to be a housewife falling out—my stepfather and my mother—she took me and we moved to ah shelter and she actually had to work... I . . . What shelter? R. Oh my stepfather ah laid a hand on my mother...in a very I think rough way that left some marks on her and woman ... I'd you just live in the shelter while your Mom went to work? R. Yes pretty much ah although I would go to school and then would meet friends... (Akim; 9, Age at arrival; Male, Ukraine).

Through the Russian and Ukrainian students shared the immigrant struggle in ways that are unique to children. The aspects that made particular impressions on them include the abrupt ending of childhood as a consequence of emigration, frequent emotional isolation from overburdened parents, isolation in the home as a result of child care responsibilities, a kind of public parentification related to the imposed role of engaging in official transactions on behalf of their parents, and finally a general rejection by American peers and more assimilated co-ethnic peers. Moreover, their narratives depicted insecurities associated with missing extended family, and living in a domestic abuse homeless shelter during the transition while the mother was at work. Because their lives were abruptly severed through emigration from Eastern Europe, faced the challenges of cultural and linguistic transition in the U.S, and shared this period of financial deprivation with their parents, the

Russian and Ukrainian child migrants in this study have internalized the immigrant status, or a sense of emotional acculturation distinctiveness that sets them apart from non-immigrant peers.

***Relationship with Neighbors in the U.S. Neighborhood***

Over half of all the Eastern European immigrant students, nine Russian and nine Ukrainian students, reported that their neighbors in their first American neighborhood were friendly. Neighborhood bonds were facilitated when relatives who had emigrated with them or preceded them lived nearby and/or when there were immigrants from their countries of origin. At the same time friendly relationships were also developed with neighbors of different backgrounds. When considering ethnic and racial composition of their first U.S. neighborhoods, ten (29.4%) of the participants, five Russian and five Ukrainian, reported that their neighbors were similar to their ethnic heritage, and fifteen (44.1%) related that at least some of their neighbors were ethnically and racially diverse even though in three of these cases most of the neighbors were predominantly co-ethnics. Additionally, there were four participants who lived in a predominantly American white neighborhood, and others had either predominantly Black, Hispanic, Jewish, or ethnic White neighbors.

Entering the multi-cultural and multi-racial American society by equally diverse immigrant populations is a complex phenomenon that is contingent on time and place (Gordon, 1964). Historically, immigrants have formed their own ethnic communities for mutual support during the period of integration (Gans, 1962; Portes and Rumbaut, 1996), and that model was applicable to a third of the participants. considerable support from their neighbors and church. They were able to make close and lasting friendships with other Ukrainians, but it hindered incorporation into the broader American

society until families moved. Additionally seven participants recalled that there was not any interaction with their neighbors, and two said that the interaction was limited with their neighbors due to the distance between houses in their suburban neighborhood.

Patterns that emerged from the participant or the lack of interaction was conditioned by their accustomed social practices, educational attainment, and class. When differences existed based on these factors discomfort ensued in their interaction with American neighbors. Approximately a quarter more of the Russian participants reported not having a connection with their neighbors. To illustrate, one participant's family avoided interaction with "little less than white trash" and Galina's modes that fostered unease in her family.

Yeah they would smile and just the whole weird because nobody ever does that in Russia and if you did that you would probably get beat up...or that's always the question „How like „Why do they ask us? They don't care that? Um like the fake smiling on the street fake...the neighbors were really friendly but because they knew we were like straight from Russia...They would try and I mean that was nice of them but like they didn't know what Russian culture was like and they were so American like you could just tell...(Galina; 10, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

The personal interaction styles of "keeping to context were at times described as effacing and different was because of unconventional living arrangements such as residing in college student housing. A few of the participants expressed disappointment in the lack of hospitality or community in their first U.S. neighborhood. Not only did Adleta miss a sense of community she felt

uncomfortable with the neighbors who emigrated from other Soviet republics that she had been taught to mistrust in Ukraine. These patterns of strained interaction and nonexistent interaction with American neighbors reflect the immigrant families accustomed to prejudices that existed in Eastern Europe during the post-Communist era. However, there were a few instances where the American neighbors were unfriendly toward the participants and their families. Yuri reasoned that his family endured acts of prejudice and discrimination in his American white neighborhood because of his family not knowing what their rights were in America.

Some of the neighbors here actually despised and discriminated against us by placing their dog's poo on our front yard. We were from another country... We didn't know America. That's why it's a disadvantage like ah how you know we didn't know what to do. When you don't know the laws you would act as if you don't know how to respond to certain things... I'm like that ah the lower in us that we were somewhere below the true American level... (Yuri; 10, Age at arrival; Male, Ukraine)

Biata's neighbors were predominantly Russian who represented other ethnicities and races. She reported that they were consistently taunted by Black and Hispanic children, and that the more assimilated Russian immigrant children teased them for not speaking English properly. When their situation became increasingly severe her father decided to move. A pattern of isolation could be discerned for over a third of the participants in their first American neighborhoods since they did not have any friends, and two participants made friends with just one other immigrant child. Most of the children that the participants did befriend in their first U.S. neighborhoods were of their own ethnic backgrounds



Consequently, the assimilation of immigrant children is facilitated by the schools (Lopreatto, 1970; Bhatnagar, 1981). When immigrant children enter U.S. schools they encounter a microcosm of American society, and "...it is their participation in an inst- Orozco, Suárez-Orozco and the new s o Todorova, 2008:2). Typically immigrant children must negotiate the school setting without English knowledge or understanding of the American culture, and the participants in this study expressed that there was apprehension during the period of acculturation.

Most of the 34 Russian and Ukrainian students attended public school (N=28; 82.4%), and the remaining went to private Jewish and Catholic schools. Of the six who attended private school, five were Russian and one was Ukrainian. Twenty-two (64.7%) of the participants entered elementary school, nine began middle school, and three were high school students upon arrival. When the Eastern European immigrant students began their studies in the American school system, 71 percent stated that they were academically advanced in their grades compared to their American peers, and that all of their parents had high expectations of them. Twelve percent more Russian students compared to Ukrainian students assessed that they were accelerated.

Well I came to the U.S. without knowing English, hello. Ah but that that was mostly the test ah when I got to (name) Elementary School...I had just finished first grade in Moscow...and they decided that I would skip grade...(Kalia, 7, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

Dimitra recalls difficulty with becoming enrolled in school for six months, and after being in her first grade for a few minutes was moved into second grade. A few of the participants were placed in advanced grades without understanding English, the American

culture, or being able to comprehend school structures since they had not attended formal school in their first country. Although they were academically advanced communicating in English was the biggest challenge they faced, and 19 (55.9%) of the participants found English composition difficult.

In the following subsections we will consider the nature of school supports provided to the Eastern European child migrants, the painful socialization that most of these participants experienced within their schools of integration, and their focus on academic achievement.

### *School Supports for Eastern European Students*

Portes and Fernández-Kelly (2008) identified that the teachers or other individuals who served as mentors were instrumental in the educational success of underprivileged immigrant children. When the Eastern Europeans were asked about the nature of their supports in school there was a mixed response. Twelve (35.3%) participants expressed that “most” teachers were supportive, nine found ESL teachers to be helpful, four had one supportive teacher, and five stated that they did not receive any meaningful assistance.

The teachers were very helpful...and understood my feelings because of the Soviet Union. I know other students' experiences from the former Soviet Union. Everyone was very welcoming and it might be because I spoke English very well because I learned it very quickly...so I was able to acclimate myself to the new environment. (Participant 9, Age at arrival; Male, Ukraine).

Yuri found his teachers “supportive and positive” because they saw that his first language was Russian. Arman recounted how his English teacher took an interest in his progress, taught him the alphabet, and systematically assigned him English language well.

Participants also expressed that while there may have been one or more teachers that were supportive, but others treated them insensitively or unfairly, underestimated the ability of the student, did not take into consideration that the student could not understand English, and/or they felt the teacher was inadequate to the task. When their self-perceptions as talented children formed in their first culture are not mirrored by the educators it caused a stressful disconnect and they strove to rectify this imbalance.

Oh on the whole I would say that well my math teacher was [supportive] but ah some of the teachers...that I saw through ESL thought that somehow I wasn't up to the standards and so on but like it was a shock for them when I did my project. They were like my God you have artistic abilities! Oh my God! How did you do this? Did you copy this or did some didn't. What are you talking about? I came and ah they kind of didn't expect too much from me, but I did I did 100 percent more and they were you know surprised when they saw it...(Calina; 10, Age at arrival; Female, Uzbekistan).

I remember having a ah computer teacher where the only thing I could say was my name is e) and that was the only thing I could say at that point and she failed me on an exam!...I never sat at a computer and never actually did anything on it and she came up to me in front of the whole class and she was saying things ah I understood like...You know why didn't you prepare exam? Like embarrassing me in front of the whole class! And the only thing I could say is my name! And I remember...I like cried my eyes out when I came home because my cousin who was in the same class did not help me! He did not translate, he did not explain to me, he just (Andreea; 9, Age at arrival; Female, Kazakhstan).

Other participants recounted being recommended when not warranted, being subjected to a "peer" grading system disadvantage due to non-acceptance, and when ostracized by other children the teacher did not intervene. Disadvantage owing to neutrality by the teachers who ignored their needs was another theme that emerged whereby they were treated precisely as the children born in America without any extra assistance during their migration transition. The teacher is often the primary liaison for

many immigrant children before they know English and understand the culture, and when teachers do not attempt to provide assistance or supports the classroom becomes an arena of struggle that may have a lasting emotional impact it illustrates.

The psychology of it I guess the memories were so traumatic that to be honest I can't recall half of the things exactly what I think psychologically 14 is the worst time earlier on I guess support, and I wish I had more al in terms support but then I probably wouldn't have time... I guess you just have to give it time everything. Everything was Made, iRussia. rent... (Gri

ESL classes often are the refuge for immigrant children during acculturation, and nearly two thirds of the participants were enrolled in these classes. Furthermore, five participants had Russian language staff members who assisted them and six were assigned Russian-speaking peer mentors that produced mixed results which will be discussed later. Although most of the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students reported that the ESL classes were helpful there were also qualifications, and sometimes ESL was valued only for the socialization experience. For instance, Andreea positively assessed one of her ESL teachers who through movies facilitated socialization between children who spoke different languages. The video depicts her frustration with her ESL experience.

I think it would be helpful if the teacher was Russian...She would show me pictures and she would say the word and that was the way we would learn. Like I couldn't really learn gludas until I remember I couldn't do this. We were walking down the hall and I was trying to figure out to say the word, „interrupt and I said „talk over „interrupt, to her. She had no idea what I was saying. And I was like „talk over actually a word like a phrase that one says...and she kept shaking her head. And I was like why can't you understand what I mean. (Female, Russia).

Occasionally students expressed opposition to the ESL programs on the basis that they were not helpful and / or on philosophical grounds. Although the overarching thrust of interventions for these participants was on learning English and acculturating, in one case “coordinators” assisted Russian first language and culture since it is a goal of the Russian community in her area.

### ***Painful Socialization Experiences in the First U.S. Schools***

The essentially painful socialization experiences of most Russian and Ukrainian child migrants who participated in this project were recounted with feeling even though with few exceptions they later had positive social interactions with their peers in high school. These contrasting outcomes in their school experiences will be discussed after their accounts have been presented of their school transitions.

In their countries of origin the make up of their school population was racially white, and rarely did they encounter ethnic diversity. When the 34 Eastern European child migrants entered U.S. schools, fourteen (41.2%) reported that their classmates were ethnically and racially diverse, and ten others attended schools where there were Jewish and white or Asian and white children. Additionally, six participants described the people and four others described the participants as a whole made substantial gains academically, social interactions during the acculturation and integration phase were frequently stressful for them. Observations have been made of children as young as kindergarten age victimizing other children based on their local language competence (Grünigen, et al, 2010) and because of their immigrant status (Salmivalli, 2011).

The patterns that emerged from the child m experiences were associated with their own overall appearance, inhibition, communication, getting used to racial diversity and being taunted by American children who were Black, Hispanic, White and Russian immigrant children who had arrived before them. As the students described the recalled events from the early period of acculturation in their schools, it was common to observe the emotional import of those recollections.

I couldn't understand why I couldn't speak these children and why they were making fun why I had so many friends in Russia and not here and it was just so so confusing... (Dima; 8, Age at arrival; Female)

Ah it was a mess—ah the south side of (name of city) which was ah there were like a lot of like Hispanic people there a kinda different because it there weren't any hard when I went to school the very first time that... They really bothered me!... (Sergei; 9)

To me it was he just seemed so big because I had never seen a person with such dark complexion even though after a while when I got to know him he was just a regular guy like he was from Jamaica so he was just so dark! It just scared me... It just meant compl arrival; Female, ck... (Adleta; 1 Ukraine).

Genka entered middle school when she emigrated to the U.S. from Ukraine at age 12, and she transcribed her transition in school as “ or ignored by Black and white American children. A third of the participants reported that they did not have any friends in their first school, four had one friend, fourteen made a few friends, and five had many friends.

I didn't have any friends because the no one k kids were like what this girl is complete l language. They couldn't communicate with and weird... You know what they were thinki child in the corner there and that was me. I isolated myself and they isolated me

as well because I was different you know I (Female, Ukraine).

Their narratives indicated that the child migrants socialized primarily with other immigrant children. Ten (29.4%) participants backgrounds, and six (17.6%) background as their own. However, a few also socialized with American-born children who shared their ethnic background, were of diverse ethnic/racial backgrounds, and who were white Jewish children. Most often the students recounted challenges with communication, connecting with others, and not understanding the American culture. For some of the participants the phase of acculturation and connected social isolation extended into years within public and private schools, and this is reflected in the selected narratives that follow.

I would observe and I would watch and I would listen and I would learn, but ah I wouldn't speak...and because I think I was stage and it would get better. Part of it was because of my overall appearance. Ah so for the first two years when I went person I hung out with was my cousin who is...three years older than I am and I was hanging out with his friends...Because again I always felt like an outcast I didn't belong. So that limited my friends friendship group I was an add on. It's not very fun...so, that's why that's all I'm going to say about that (Russia).

Similarly, Katarina described the transition four years. During the interview she was visibly upset recounting her memories as a seven-year-old immigrant child in a Catholic school who classmates because she was academically advanced.

When I came here and I started first grade... I mean yeah I didn't know the language but little kids can be so cruel because it was horrible! The first four years were absolutely horrible! I went there considered an outsider. I liked it there by a way and I

was just doing what I was told. I was doing the homework. I was answering the questions, and they felt like that I was somehow cheating them out of their

life...My Mom wanted me to skip that grade, but here! . . . (Katarina; 7, Age at arrival; Female)

Petrov, who arrived at age five from Russia, had a long-term integration period where he struggled for acceptance in both Hebrew and public schools. As a result of being ostracized he

describes himself as having been a “violent” and

You know like being an immigrant you kind anywhere. You don't really understand why people aren't with you and if they are not comfortable with you then you're not comfortable with them. even though it was a Jewish kindergarten...I you know it should click but no! I was culturally Jewish in the sense that you know I'm Jewish because I feel Jewish...They religiously and tediously...I didn't really background... (Petrov; 5, Age at arrival; Male)

Akim who experienced several moves, homelessness, and being out of school for an extended period of time because the system failed him talked about his socialization challenges

in a “blue collar community” where he was excruciatingly angry and frustration over this recalled childhood experience was apparent during the interview.

The first six months I think I didn't speak the language...And I think at first I spent learning myself kind of. Then, I started to write more and become more familiar with the language. . . I learned very quickly bad...It was when we started moving in 1997 constantly that I would miss out learning...I remember going to school for about a week...just to get into the school. I went to school for about six months. I just stayed then we moved to (town) and I have a personal hatred for it there were just assholes...They were closed don't have enough bad things in my mouth. was horrible...They were a collection of this but to the purpose it's a very blue collar community, kid... (Akim, 9, Age at arrival; Male, Ukraine)

In addition to regularly being pinched and tormented by a Russian-speaking child who was assigned to help Yuri, he also recounts being "pushed" by African American children and felt he had no other recourse but to accept the treatment.

Other than the pinching part and learning the ah new language I was actually pushed by ah some African Americans pushed and made fun of me because I didn't know what they were talking about... They know pushed me around just because they know anything... So I just accepted it because they started to act that way. I don't know why. life or something like ah you could have advantage of because the person is not able to respond...(Yuri; 10, Age at arrival; Male, Ukraine).

Even though the specific circumstances for each of these child migrants vary, they had in common being placed on the lowest rung of the peer social hierarchy in their schools because they were immigrants who could not communicate in English or understand the American cultural conventions. However, some of the difficulties with socialization that they encountered are connected to the differences in the educational structures in the U.S. compared to what they had been accustomed to in their former countries. In Eastern Europe children formed close friendships since they moved as a group from first grade through eleventh grade. Another factor that impacted the type of socialization they experienced was linked to ethnic composition of children. For example, Biata wanted her "only Russian" friends and for 10 years she did not have any friends in her school or neighborhood. Yet, she did not discuss her sense of isolation with her parents because "your feelings from their social isolation was at times found in their ESL classes."

I remember that I was just very lonely in everyone was learning ah English together so at that time that was our main commonality... a different backgrounds and I still have maintained them...(Larisa; 7, Age at arrival; Female, U

The few students who had reported having experienced easy integrations in their schools typically had learned English over the summer through their interaction with the neighborhood children who had accepted them and/or their parents had encouraged assimilation. However, there were also variations found in their narratives. To illustrate, Vadim found that whereas in his neighborhood he had formed friendships with children of different ethnic backgrounds, his friends in school were exclusively children of the same ethnic background together when forming their “Russia-year-old soccer team.” When he entered a “strictly Jewish kindergarten” where he transferred to a public school he self-isolated because he could not communicate in English.

### *Negative Salient Experiences in the Early Transitional School Encounters*

In the endeavor to shed further light on the phenomenon of childhood migration transitions in the U.S. schools the 34 Russian and Ukrainian child migrants were encouraged to discuss what they considered to be their most salient positive and negative memories.

Frequently the participants provided more than one memory within their narratives and collectively there were nearly twice as many negative recollections compared to positive ones, 114 and 59 respectively. Only five participants stated that they did not have any negative

memories from their first school. The participants reported negative experiences the inability to communicate in English, isolation, not fitting in, not having friends, hostile acts towards them, not understanding the American culture, and the first day of school. A few more Ukrainians compared to Russians talked about isolation, not fitting in, not having friends, and experiencing hostile acts against them. These narratives can gain insights into what they believed to be particularly difficult experiences in their first

American school. The first day of school can engender feelings of excitement, anticipation, and apprehension. When children experience educational disruption in one country and continue it in

a new cultural context there are additional c  
graphically depicts her self-perception as an “alien” in an un

My first day of school I felt really small. I really felt tiny. It was like being in a movie you know with these giants that step over you speaking a language that you don't understand... My mother sent me down and I didn't understand... My ring and her comes just standing over me. I'm just standing t and I just felt out of place... And I dressed differently you know. I ah just looked different. I felt like an alien...(Eleni; 8, Age at arrival; Female, Uzbekistan).

Since Markov had never attended a formal school in Ukraine, he was at a particular disadvantage when he found himself locked out of school, and could not communicate basic needs such as when he needed to use the bathroom.

What happened was like I knew that from the first day when I came in you had to line up show the room number 224... Then like happened ah I went by myself for the first yard and I didn't know why number and go... and so walked around and I started to get really nervous and then the bell rang and everyone started to line up and I was like oh crap where do I line up?... And then everyone started walking in and once everyone walked in the doors closed. And then I was left all by myself in the school didn't know what to do... and so I started ch locked... and there were a couple of corners like ju sarkov; 6, Age at arrival; Male, Ukraine).

In addition to challenges with the language, the child migrants reported contending with mainstream children who commonly set boundaries of the worst memories were related to feelings of isolation and difficulty in forming friendships with American-born children who rejected, taunted and described how she took desperate measures to persuade children to play with her.

I was kind of quiet and to tell the truth I guess it was due to the fact that I had no friends, and I remember in third grade well actually I had ...brought like a tiny little Red Swiss Army knife and I started chasing the kids around ah the playground with it to basically make them you know this little blond girl with an ethnic appearance chasing kids around and because no one would play with me...(Dimitra; 6, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

Early school transitions in America were traumatic for the Eastern European immigrant students who were subjected to acts of hostility, prejudice and discrimination at the hands of American children of various backgrounds including more assimilated Russian peer mentors.

I didn't have English help ~~men~~out, but I so she assign remember not liking him at all for certain foods for lunch from Russia and I remember him actually making fun of that. I couldn't understand it. I thought that he through much of the same thing as I did but either way I remember not liking him at all because he would make fun of me all day in school. It ah it kind of got to the point where everything I did in that school I always depended on him. For example, riding my bus I had to ask him what the right line was...ah if I had to go to the bathroom I had to go with him...(Adrik; 6, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

A Russian child. He helped me with the language and to read books. And I started reading ah in English text books very fast...but he also I wasn't in America as long as he was! I rational maybe...and at the end of that year to 5th grade that quiet ka..nd was a treasure why a child ah Russian child any more and that pinching third grade. I really couldn't do anything because I didn't want ~~really do anything about it~~enge...And because ah I was a child and I really didn't school environment. It was new people in environment new space new ah atmosphere new world and not knowing the laws... I wasn't aware of the culture of what you're not allowed to do here...You're just on ah to learn to learn fast...(Yuri; 10, Ag

When Eva entered a diverse middle school in the U.S. she had hoped for acceptance especially since in Ukraine she had been subjected to prejudice and discrimination as an

identified Jewish child. Instead, Eva's narr

included having trash thrown at her by children of various ethnicities. When she attempted to intercede on her behalf the Russian translator informed her that it was Eva who needed to adapt.

I started 5th grade and ah people they were there started telling people that I wasn't from so people started talking and sort of star thing was in the cafeteria they were throwing trash at me and I would wear a new coat that my parents would buy and it was frustrating because it was really difficult for us to buy things because you know it was hard for us to buy clothes even though my parents worked we still had home every day crying and my tears were rolling and I said, why am I even here? You see what is going spots and my Mom would have to wash it all of the time, and then the next day it was the same thing!...I would actually come home and I would have trash in my hair. I would have food in my hair!...they would pull my hair. It was it was awful...I had a hope of just being accepted acceptance... (Eva; 10, Age at arrival; Female)

Sergei was the only white European child in his first school that had a predominant Hispanic population, and he recounted the severe harassment that he was subjected to and which has had an enduring effect on him.

R. Yeah like every day I had to go to the school bus—like I had to go to the school bus stop, and these Hispanic kids would come and going to school and coming back and they harassed me throughout the whole day!...There were Blacks, and I wasn't used to that either by Russia...the Black kids were also hostile towards you? R. No no not as much not as much...It was the Hispanic kids with me for some reason...I really don't have really like to talk about it either...I think I got the worst of the stereotype... (Sergei; 9, Age at arrival; Male)

Accounts of victimization prompted expressions of frustration during the interview as Petrov's narrative illustrates.

Oh my God this why he... Just didn't know like me started kicking on me and you know and he would do these terrible things. He would put his foot on my back and kick off and sent me crying and I was just

r o u g h e d u p a n d s o l i k e o n e c h i l d a n d t h i s k i d d f i n a l l y  
 for all his harassment he falls to the ground and starts crying! And everybody is  
 staring at me! Like ah and you know my grandmother came out and she was like  
 standing on the lawn and she was helping me and I just remember like I was just  
 c r y i n g b u t n o t f r o m a n y p a i n i t w a s s o e m o  
 w a s h a p p e n i n g ... I r e m e m b e r a s k i n g m y g r a n d m o  
 m e ? ... S h e s a i d , „ B e c a u s e t h e y a r e i d i o t s . . .  
 Russia).

Their negative experiences with their peers were essentially associated with their  
 inability to communicate in English and not being able to understand the American culture, and  
 their powerlessness when they were ostracized and/or mistreated was linked to their immigrant  
 status. Furthermore, the participants came from racially homogeneous societies and their  
 narratives indicated that most of them learned to adapt to the ethnic and racial diversity in the  
 U.S. over time, and it is possible that some of the participants may have transmitted  
 discomfort with diverse American peers on some level. Differences in class and culture also  
 could have created the barriers between the mainstream American peers and the Eastern  
 European child migrants in their first schools. However, it is not readily apparent why the more  
 assimilated co-ethnics were hostile to the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students. One  
 important insight regarding this phenomenon was provided by a participant who was ostracized  
 by English-speaking Russian children. She reasoned that these co-ethnics were still striving to  
 be part of the mainstream social group, and if they were heard speaking Russian to her it would  
 undermine their chances. It is clear that the newly-arrived immigrant children were often  
 r e l e g a t e d t o t h e l o w e s t p o s i t i o n i n t h e s c h o o  
 language or culture; i.e., they were not acculturated. Running through the participants' often  
 emotionally laden narratives of their integration in the American schools is the pattern of  
 contending on their own since their parents were not able to advocate for them or in rare cases

when the parents attempted to intervene they were not able to change the circumstances for their children.

Despite the many challenges the Eastern European child migrants encountered 28 recalled at least one “best” early school memory personal accomplishments in school. Having learned English within a relatively brief period of time was something many participants took pride in many scholarships for which she received recognition because of her immigrant status, and Katarina recalls with pride the certificates she earned for being the “best student.” the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students overcoming obstacles.

I went to math class and ah our teacher would ah...she would give us problems and she would hand out lollipops to the first person who solved ah me and the Russian girl we worked out a deal where she would interpret the problem and...I would solve the problem and 12, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

Instrumental and supportive teachers that had high expectations for the participants as they struggled with learning English, and who would not accept excuses are particularly valued. Lena appreciated the caring environment in her Catholic school where she was encouraged to participate in activities that showcased her talents. As a result she was not viewed as an immigrant child but rather as an accomplished student. Receiving recognition by American educators for their academic achievements boosted their sense of self that had been assaulted through social interaction with peers and it provided continuity to their orientation of striving for educational excellence that was established in their first country. On the other hand these publicly recognized achievements were at times resented by American-born children.

The most salient dimension within the Russian their first U.S. school experiences is associated with their socialization during the period of integration. Two thirds of the participants had difficult or traumatic overall migration transitions in the American schools during childhood, and the emotions that accompanied this stressful chapter of their incorporation seemed to resonate when they recalled these events. The comparison by age bears out that the transitional experiences of those who arrived between the ages of five through eight compared to those aged nine through twelve were similar. This age span encompasses the critical developmental stage associated with “school age” where competence may be undermined if not completed successfully, and where greater vulnerability linked to adjustment has been discerned when children experience alterations stemming from migration. In terms of gender, the percentage comparisons indicate that twelve percent more male students had more traumatic or difficult overall experiences compared to female students. This is a relatively small difference, but it is interesting since in contrast female students more often expressed negative feelings about moving to the U.S.

### ***Phase Two: Improved High School Experiences***

Relational engagement or feelings of connectedness with peers, teachers and others has been found to be pivotal for immigrant children, and when they form positive relationships in school they are “most likely to succeed” (Orozco, Suárez-Orozco and Todorova, 2008:43). In contrast to the elementary and middle-school experiences, we find in the students narratives success combined with a growing acceptance used as a catalyst by peers. Twenty-five (73.5%) of the students attended the district public high schools and nine (26.9%) attended private, magnet, charter or the International Baccalaureate Program within

large urban diverse high schools. By their own assessments they continued to make excellent academic progress; 71 percent reported that they were academically advanced and 23 percent said that they had made good academic progress. Many were in Advanced Placement classes, attending gifted programs, or accelerated in special programs within their public, private or charter schools. A third of the participants stated that their families had moved prior to entering high school citing reasons that included better school systems in the suburbs, better residential sections in their city, concerns over crime, home within the same community. However, there were also accounts where students tested into city schools with an ethnically and racially diverse student population within a Black neighborhood, and two thirds of the participants attended ethnically and racially diverse schools. Only one Russian student described his high school classmates as having been predominately co-ethnics, and seven participants stated that their student population was composed of primarily “A m e r i c a n w h i t e s ” o r “ w h i t e s . ” S o m e t i m e s t h e high school shifted their position; that is, from being a member of the white majority to becoming a member of a white minority within a predominantly Black student population.

Overall, the participants in this study had experienced ethnic and racial diversity in their transitional schools and/or in the high school. However, whereas in their first schools in the U.S. they most often contended with lack of acceptance, in high school the majority felt that they were accepted and that their culture was a valuable ability to communicate in English, and greater understanding of the American culture contributed to the positive high school experience. Some of the participants offered additional explanations for the positive changes in their socialization during high school. That is, the

rationale for the difference in school experience was associated with the developmental stages of the children and/or greater representation of their own ethnic groups in high school. Commonly the participants in this investigation assessed that the pre-adolescent children generally were not accepting of difference since they were motivated to fit into the mainstream, but the adolescents in their high schools expressed an interest in other cultures. When the participants had experienced ridicule based on their ethnicity in their transitional schools where they were part of a small minority, attending a high school with a significant representation of co-ethnics in an environment of acceptance was particularly appreciated.

[In first school] there wasn't any understanding and they were not interested in me...I mean that is why I liked high school so much more. People were more giving...since (name) High School is one of the biggest high schools in (city) and that had so many people and there were so many people from so many different countries... (Eleni; 8, Age at arrival; Female)

One student explained how his immigrant status had changed overnight when his family moved to the suburbs. Although he had become Americanized his classmates continued to view him as an immigrant in his first school, but within the context of his new nearly all-white high school his classmates perceived him as “just overall socio-economic circumstances had improved for the participants families to dress in a similar fashion as their mainstream peers if they chose to. All of these changes added to the collective improved socialization experiences in their U.S. high schools. Whereas in their first school only 5 (14.7%) of the Eastern European immigrant students reported that they had made many friends, in high school 17 (54.8%) had many friends and 12 (38.7%) had made a few friends in high school. During their transitions, a third of the participants recounted that they did not have any friends, and in high school none of them were isolated. Concomitantly, 25

(80.6%) expressed that there were not any social challenges in high school, but during the migration transition there was only one student whose narrative reflected this outcome.

Despite accounts of a high level of accept narratives indicated that they still contended with certain challenges associated to their first culture and assimilation. For example, Genka enjoyed the fact that “there Ukrainians” in her high school compared to the Indian, Albanian and Asian students. At the welcome her in high school. Within their narratives there were also patterns reflective of variations in incorporation pathways as well as in their social interaction with mainstream peers and co-ethnics. Ivan and a few other participants had chosen to focus on their studies almost exclusively rather than to socialize in high school, and this choice possibly undermined further understanding of American cultural convention other Russian children “they had had friends” “they had had friends” were younger or were socialized in Brooklyn. Despite the fact that several participants attended high schools with “bad” reputations they successful socialization experiences. Collectively, they had become much more integrated since fourteen students narratives highlighted their activities who discussed extracurricular activities in their first school.

I just had a lot of friends... I was in band and orchestra [clarinet] any more but I sort of learned it back in Russia and so I played it for all these years... And skateboarding. I started chance. It got kind of serious so me and my friends we go all over the like country and go skating... we mostly film video and stuff like that and make videos and stuff... In high school I became very involved with the debate team, with the National Honor Society with the jazz band, with the orchestra... so I was very involved with extracurricular activities.

Yeah so I think that was a lot of fun for me...(Sergei; 9, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

Petrov's narrative is ~~social change in high school~~. of a d r  
 He had become introverted, stayed at home, and gained much weight as a result of the traumatic transitional experiences, but everything changed in the last two years of high school for the better. Ironically, it was another huge disappointment in his socialization that became the catalyst for change since the resulting depression caused weight loss. The ensuing positive physical transformation increased Petrov's confidence. Eva, who had many traumatic experiences during her transition in the U.S. middle school, provided a narrative of her positive high school experience that facilitated the regaining of her "outgoing" self. In summary, narratives indicated that their relational engagement with their peers had improved to a great extent in high school. However, while none of the students remained reflecting ongoing challenges such as not being able to make close and "trusting" connections with white American peers, and not being able to fully understand the culture.

### Summary

The Eastern European immigrant students' overall difficult and emotional acculturation process during their childhood incorporation in the U.S. context. Although a few reported easy migration transitions, the accounts by the majority of the participants reflect intense challenges that stemmed from not having emotionally or substantively been prepared for the changes, adjusting to changes in relationships and roles within the immigrant household, struggles with communication and the American culture and connecting with American peers, negotiating a new linguistic and cultural terrain without

parents assistance, and broadly contending with belonging or having allies. For the students that were the target of ridicule, prejudice and discrimination the memories of victimization remain painful. These narratives are reflective of the research on children's victimization link previously. Nonetheless, as a group they were motivated and succeeded in learning English, finding expanded zones of comfort in the high school years and accomplishing high academic goals. Consequently, their social circumstances during high school had improved dramatically with most reporting that they had become integrated in school life and had made close friendships. Although the participants narrate the integration of immigrant children, there were also narratives that contained elements reflective of common challenges among the older age cohorts of immigrants. Collectively, the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students narrate experiences illustrate varied and complex processes of social integration. In the next two chapters, we now turn to a consideration of the child ~~emotional and~~ social adjustments in the young adult years of college and explore how the disrupted critical childhood developmental stages may have impacted their constructed self-identifications as well as their adjustments to the multicultural college environment in which they all eventually found themselves.

## CHAPTER 6

### IDENTITY FORMATION

*I think of myself as a citizen of the world and an educator a scholar and a  
 affiliation with a country strong enough to say that I was either Russian or  
 American or that I would ever be either you know so I think that in college I  
 learned the language to describe myself in an institutionalized and social  
 context... ( Len a ge at arrival; Female, Russia).*

In the previous chapters we have discussed the different phases of the Eastern European  
 immigrant students childhood transitions whi  
 of them. We now turn to the topic of identity formation by first discussing briefly why  
 historically it has been a central issue for immigrants. Afterwards we will address the  
 conceptualization of identity, processes of constructing self-identifications, research on identity  
 claims by second generation youth, and the identity claims by the participants in this study.

Incorporation and constructions of self-identifications are interconnected in the  
 adaptation processes of masses of immigrants over time into U.S. society from every region of  
 the world. The integration of diverse ethnic and racial groups has not been even. At the time of  
 the Revolution most of the population was English and Protestant, but there were also large  
 numbers of Germans, Scotch Irish as well as smaller groups of other northern and western  
 Europeans . When diverse groups began to arri  
 over the successful incorporation of immigrants increased. In order to become an American, the  
 dominant group expected and imposed upon the immigrants that they assimilate by forsaking  
 their culture and language and conform to the language, culture, institutions of the dominant  
 English group. Assimilation is defined as a process whereby a dominant group can  
 “. . . e f f e c t i v e d n suboindimate groups that these becomelvirtually

indistinguishable from the dominant theoretical culture . . . frameworks were developed that reflected specific stages of this type of incorporation, and later modifications were made in this model to accommodate the variations observed in the incorporation experiences of diverse immigrant groups. Controversy exists over whether or not assimilation models are relevant at all given the patterns of incorporation observed in the U.S. as well as in other receiving countries (Esser in Portes and DeWind, 2007). (An overview of principal theoretical perspectives that evolved over time on this topic has been included in Chapter One.) However, for the purpose of this discussion on the historical interrelationship of self-identification and incorporation by immigrants since it is an example of how the process was expected to occur according to the White-Anglo Blueprint (Doane, 2003:3). It predicts the successful incorporation of immigrants contingent on completing each of seven assimilative stages successfully; i.e., cultural or behavioral, structural, marital, identificational, attitude receptional, behavior receptional, and civic assimilation. The fourth stage, identificational assimilation, or the development of a sense of peoplehood based exclusively on the host society (Gordon, 1964:71) has utility for this discussion. Whether immigrants choose to identify completely or partially or not at all with the mainstream American culture has engendered debate about the nature of their incorporation within the social and political arenas. Retention of the language and culture of origin has stimulated questions about immigrants and patriotism to America. At the same time there are oppositional forces to prevent certain ethnic and racial groups from becoming incorporated fully or otherwise.

... although white Americans have generally s  
 foreigners, they have been more willing to accept the members of some groups  
 than others. In particular, the history of the United States shows that white  
 resistance to the inclusion of different groups is greater against those who are

defined as „no matter how it is defined to be ... (McLemore, 1983: 7) .

This interconnected phenomenon can be observed through the tensions in the processes of ascription and assertion of ethnic and racial identity, and the 20<sup>th</sup> century global conflicts were organized in part by ethnic and racial terms (Cornell and Hartmann, 2007). Boundaries are established between groups based on ascription and assertion, and political, economic and social rights are contested based on the emergent identity claims. However, the concept of “identity” itself and how it is constructed is dependent on the theoretical orientation and academic field. Debate exists over how individuals mediate social change since the nature of the interconnection between the individual and societal structures is such that it produces tensions during the process of identity formation. For example, the equilibrium model by Burke and Stets that includes the capacity for individuals to make adjustments has been criticized for an inherent contradiction since social structure places limitations on individuals to make those adjustments (Berezin, 2010:221).

Identity formation for child migrants is a simultaneous cultural, psychological, developmental and emotional phenomenon that does not readily lend itself to one-dimensional micro or macro level theoretical analysis. Nevertheless, as has been discussed in previous chapters, the process of self-identification within disrupted childhoods related to immigration and transitions in new cultural and linguistic contexts has not received sufficient attention. This is surprising given the standpoint that identity formation in children generally is an exceedingly multifaceted phenomenon.

*...Identity formation begins where the usefulness of multiple identification ends. It arises from the selective repudiation and mutual assimilation of childhood identifications, and their absorption in a new configuration, which in turn, is*

dependent on the process by which a *society* (often through subsocieties) *identifies the young individual*, recognizing him as somebody who had to become the way he is, and who, being the way he is, is taken for granted. The community, often not without some initial mistrust, given such recognition with a (more or less institutionalized) display of surprise and pleasure in making the acquaintance of a newly emerging individual. For the community by the individual who can neither ask for recognition nor ends with adolescence: it is a lifelong development largely unconscious to the individual and to his society. Its roots go back all the way to the first self-recognition: in the baby's earliest something of a *self-recognition* (Erikson, 1959, 1980:122)

The task for child migrants then is to undergo mutual positive recognition between themselves and their community in the countries of origin, and continue this ongoing process in an initially unfamiliar cultural and linguistic social context. The basic fact that their circumstances have changed impacts the self; that is, individuals no longer perceive themselves “in fixed and definitive terms” (Erikson, 1959). Among the Eastern European immigrant students in this study since the greatest majority expressed that their self-identification has changed over time. However, somewhat more of the Russian students compared to Ukrainian students perceived that their identity was not fixed.

Identity formation of immigrant youth has been found to have implications for their adaptation. In a seminal work on the immigrant second generation, Rumbaut and Portes found nationality or ethnicity to be a significant predictor of youth outcomes.

...We learned a great deal from our comparative acculturation, family and school life, language, identity, experiences of discrimination, self-esteem, ambition, and achievement. But we also discovered that every multivariate analysis of CILS results identified nationality or ethnicity as a strong and significant predictor of virtually every adaptation outcome. Just what *ethnicity* meant, however, was not self-evident from those analyses (Rumbaut and Portes, 2001:xvii).

Rumbaut and Portes investigated the adaptation trajectories of the second generation immigrant Mexican, Cuban, Nicaraguan, Filipino, Vietnamese, Haitian, Jamaican, and other West Indian groups from San Diego and the Miami/Ft. Lauderdale areas. Although Eastern European groups are not included in this large-scale study and some of the comparisons made were based on a sample that included both foreign born and native born youth, there were certain patterns discerned in the self-identifications of youth are relevant to the discussion of identity claims in a context of globalization, trans-nationalism, and cultural exchange between newcomers and the host society. Whereas the general trend historically has been for the immigrants become less important to them over time (Myers, 2003), researchers have found increasing saliency of ethnic self-identification among the second generation that often was associated with prejudice and discrimination (Rumbaut and Portes, 2001). Such response by adolescents to the social and political environment. To illustrate, Lopez and Stanton-Salazar found that changes in ethnic identity in their San Diego, California sample was prevalent among the Mexican adolescents over a three-year period, 1992-1995, with a general shift from panethnic to Mexican and to a lesser degree to Mexican-American (in Rumbaut and Portes, 2001:69-71). Although the authors caution about drawing conclusions for the observed shift, this change may be associated with the historical anti-immigrant sentiment during that time period that culminated in the fierce debate over Proposition 187 in California that was written to deny rights to undocumented immigrants. The perceived attack on all Mexican immigrants may have reinforced foreign identities, but the researchers also point out that the foreign-born children tended to identify as Mexican regardless since they were born there and the native-born children of immigrants most often preferred a hyphenated identity

of Mexican-American. Overall, the researchers have established an association between the divergent paths in identity formation and the degree of successful integration into American society. However, research also indicates that individuals select overlapping and complex identity components in their narratives depending on multiple factors that may include acculturation-assimilation discourse (Vila, 2000) which will be discussed in greater detail below.

Additionally, Mexican immigrants and Mexican-Americans refer to “Mexican ethnicity or nationality depending on the context of their identity.”

Race has been found to be a central factor in identity formation and related integration in the U.S. context. Whereas whites have ethnic opportunity to enter the mainstream (Gans, 1979; Waters, 1990), race conditioned the different paths among the West Indian and Haitian-origin adolescents in New York City (Waters, 1994; 2001). Waters found that they selected primarily identities that were American, ethnic American and some distancing from black Americans or maintained immigrant identities (2001:802). These self-identifications were associated with how race is perceived as well as the socio-economic status and structure of the family, where they attended school, and social networks. The divergent mobility patterns discerned in the outcomes of the West Indian and Haitian youth are reflective of the theoretical perspective of segmented assimilation as developed by Portes and Rumbaut where the history of the first generation, acculturation process, barriers for second-generation youth, and family and community resources influence the nature of the second generation immigrant assimilation (2001:45-46).

Immigrant youth identity formation has been found to be particularly multifaceted within large ethnically and racially diverse centers such as New York City. One aspect of this phenomenon is linked to ascription by others discussed in terms of (Vila, 2008). To illustrate, native-born Americans ascribe the identity of Chinese to Koreans, Russian Jews to American Jews, and African American to West Indians.

How individuals construct their self-identifications then is influenced by many interconnected external and internal factors. In a study of constructions by people who live on the U.S.-Mexico border, he asked the participants to select photographs depicting scenes of both sides of the border and describe them. Through this method he discerned a high level of complexity in the narratives that the participants constructed about the photographs as well as during his follow-up dialogic interviews (2000; 2005). Essentially, Vila found that individuals construct their identity narratives through interpellations, metaphors or tropes, and that the logic behind these constructions flow from and are intertwined with their ethnicity, region and nation. Further nuance is added to the process of border identifications when taking into account subject positions that include religion, gender and class. Moreover, identity itself is not fixed, but instead it is a construct which is constantly negotiated with others “... as its contours are defined and redefined” (Vila, 2005).

Vila argues that despite the somewhat greater complexities of living at the border, the processes in the struggle for identification that he has observed are applicable for other settings. Furthermore, there are variations in the type of linguistic devices individuals employ to construct their narrative self-identifications.

... I am not claiming that tropes are more important for understanding the process of identity construction. My point is that all three

are intertwined and that some of them can take precedence over the others in particular situations of identity construction. Sometimes people construct their identity purely in categorical terms, through the interpellations they assume for themselves and apply to others; other times they do so throughout a well-developed narrative, and still other times they rely on tropes. Most of the time, though, people use these linguistic devices (and many nonlinguistic ones, of course) all together in a complex intertwining of narratives, categories, and metaphors, where it is not always clear which one precedes the other, because all three devices have the same basic efficacy of... (Villa)

The Eastern European immigrant students who arrived in the U.S. during childhood may have incorporated similar processes when they constructed their self-identifications. Parallels may be drawn with the participants at the Mexico-U.S. border in terms of living in regions where language, customs and culture is ambiguous and/or represent hybrid elements since they lived in an era of national, cultural, political and linguistic change within the former Soviet Republics. However, during their childhood in the U.S. the participants reported having had different integration experiences, and they had lived in various U.S. neighborhoods that reflected a wide range of ethnic and racial compositions. At the time of the interviews they were university students in the midst of adapting to an urban campus. Consequently, in addition to the varied contexts of socialization, their narrative identities emerge from any number of subject positions that may include immigrant, student, gender, class, religion, role and others as well as reflect their past, present and envisioned future experiences. All of these factors point to the complex processes that are involved as individuals strive for meaning within fluid environments. Comparisons of the patterns found in the organization of their narratives in terms of sameness and differences in their identity claims will be discussed later herein.

Stephen Cornell and Douglas Hartmann (2007) in their constructionist model of identity formation also discuss the effects of many variables on group identity, but their focus is on the

construction of ethnicity and race and how these identities influence human action. According to their perspective, ethnicity and race are not merely the by-products of economic, political or social forces, but these constructed identities provide meaning, negotiate social relations, stimulate collective action, and for many there is an emotional component. Although their theoretical framework pertains to group identities, the processes that they discuss are often applicable to individuals such as the assignment and assertion of ethnicity and race. Identity claims can be made by individuals and groups and outsiders can ascribe identities to others.

...E t h n i c i t y a n d r a c e a r e n o t s i m p l y l a b e l s identities that people accept, resist, choose, specify, invent, redefine, reject, actively defend, and so forth. They involve not only circumstances but also active responses to circumstances by individuals and groups, guided by their own preconceptions, dispositions, and agendas ... ( C o r n e l l a n d H a r t m a n n , 2 0 0 7 : 8 1 ) .

The phenomenon of identity assertion and assignment is an ongoing interactive process that does not have an end point. Group claims about their ethnic and racial identity may not be recognized by others which in turn may potentially impact social, political and economic outcomes. In the previous discussion on the identity claims of the second generation youth examples were given of ascription by mainstream society to ethnic groups that did not conform to their self-perception. Moreover, discrimination fostered assertion of ethnic self-identifications. These findings on the non-white second generation also brought to the forefront that race continues to be ascribed even though the individual may assert a different racial identity claim. White individuals in the U.S. typically do not need to make assertions about their whiteness unless it is perceived to be an ambiguous white status. It has been observed that whites generally do not perceive themselves as having a race or the advantages that come with. When considering identity construction, white people are usually able to assert ethnic

components into their self-identifications that would be recognized by others. In contrast, people of color are often ascribed a race regardless of what ethnicity or race they may assert in their self-identifications. As will be discussed herein, the Eastern European immigrant students asserted a variety of different non-ethnic and ethnic identity claims because as essentially perceived white immigrants they were able to do so. At the same time, some also encountered ascription by others that influenced their constructions of self-identifications.

Cornell and Hartmann (2007) also assert that individuals may continually shift their self-identifications throughout their life contingent on many factors that include constructed primordiality such as blood ties, reconstructed circumstances and the contextual elements in their environment. Moreover, ethnicity and race may be comprehensively organized by their constructed identity, and for others it may be “thin” with minimal influence on their social life (2007:86). Within this constructionist model there is the capacity for people to weigh elements in their self-identifications in addition to or instead of ethnicity and race, such as gender, religion or role, and order the components according to saliency. These patterns have been found within the narratives of the participants in this study. To describe layers of ethnicity in an identity claim, Cornell and Hartmann utilize the terminology of multiethnicity, and they do not utilize the hyphen between ethnic and national identity constructs.

The inclusion of the hyphen by immigrants has been contentious throughout our history with the mainstream Americans questioning and fighting them well as their willingness to assimilate. This topic continues to be debated in the contemporary media by immigrants and those who were born in the U.S. Various standpoints are expressed for

and against the inclusion of the hyphen and , therefore , the “ h y p h e n ” interpreted differentially. When the hyphen anchors ethnicity to American national identity it may convey equal saliency or give prominence to the component that is placed first, i.e. Russian-American or American-Ukrainian. Since the participants in this study most often ranked the saliency of their selected identity components, and since there may be overlapping components in their self-identifications omitting the hyphen facilitates a discussion that more closely represents the process of identity construction observed during the interviews. Therefore, in this discussion the patterns of identity claims are organized under the following labels: 1) non ethnic [Cosmopolitan/Global/Role]; 2) ethnic [Russian/Ukrainian]; 3) ethnic or multiethnic and American [ethnic component(s) and an American component]; 4) National [American].

The accounts by the Eastern European immigrant students of their immigration and transitional experiences present a nuanced picture of internal and external dynamic processes that impact their forming selves in the new cultural and linguistic environment reflecting at once the dispositions that potentially were formed in their primary and secondary socialization experiences. In addition to the unfamiliar context, the modes of reception by peers, navigating unfamiliar cultural terrains, and ascription by others are some of the factors that influence the emerging self in the new context. The memories of their socialization in their first country, often unprepared and abrupt severance from their homes, and the frequently difficult and emotional transitions in the U.S. imprinted their emerging selves. At the same time, as a group they have become highly integrated into the campus community, have acculturated to varying degrees, and form friendships with immigrant students from different backgrounds as well as with students

who were born in the U.S. narratives of identity constructions, and the open-ended question format was followed during the interviews in order to maximize their full expression on this dimension. When researchers provide participants with categories to choose from or place parameters around the dimension of interest, the methodology may constrain and/or predetermine the results.

### **Current Self-identifications of Eastern European Immigrant Students**

We have discussed previously that those who have lived in more than one context or in regions where there are competing cultures and languages tend to forge self-identifications that are complex. Since the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students who participated in this study interrupted the process of identity construction in their countries of origin during different childhood developmental stages there may be other influences that impact their identity formation. However, not all of the participants recalled having an identity as children in their first countries, but the participants who expressed that they were aware of an identity stated that they identified by national or ethnic origin.

The translations of self within the U.S. context by the Eastern European child migrants resulted predominantly into hybrid self-identifications with salient components that were non ethnic, ethnic, ethnic American, and multiethnic American. Half of the Russian and Ukrainian participants reported that they had a salient non ethnic self-identification, and eleven of those reflected a fluid dimension where identities are adaptive to specific situations and/or are of a global nature, and six preferred to be identified based on a personal role or attribute. The patterns that emerged within the other half of divided with one quarter reporting salient ethnic (Russian or Ukrainian) self-identifications and

the remaining quarter reporting either ethnic American or multi ethnic American identity claims.

Individuals attach different meanings to ethnic and national identities, and the self-description or

reference to others as “Russian” or “Ukrainian and/or the culture. Although some of the stu-

first nation in their identity claims, such as possessing dual citizenship, in other narratives it was

not as straight-forward. Therefore, whenever a single salient identity was provided reflecting the

participants country of-identification. And if they included coded

“Russian” or “Ukrainian” as one of the compon-

either ethnic American or multi ethnic American, depending on the components of their

constructed self-identifications. It is also important to bear in mind that the utilization of

“Russian” or “Ukrainian” may signify affiliation

culture, and the meanings that individuals attach to these identities and how they employ them

may shift depending on the context and what they signify may change over time.

Within the students narratives of ethnic

of incorporating two or more components in self-identifications when the student was Jewish

since being “Jewish” was considered Communist societies, and they a l i t y ”

explained that the meanings they attach to be

birth and religion. Seven Ukrainians in their partici-

identity formation and two of those were ex-

the identity constructions were ethnic or non ethnic, the large majority of the participants

frequently incorporated layers that reflected fluidity or adaptability within their constructions of

self-identifications.

None of the Russian and Ukrainian participants reported an unequivocal mainstream identity of “American” but five participants reference to their first country such as “American with Americanized.” One third of the 34 participants layered self-identifications that included being “more Americanized now” “American or “Aimierziana” student.” To illustrate, nine to the U.S., identified herself as a “Japanese American citizen.” The participants describe American who expressed incorporated within their narratives that it cannot be otherwise since America is not their country of birth, identities were ascribed by others and/or they did not want to be constrained by any label. Further exploration for this phenomenon will be considered within the discussion at the end of this chapter.

Across group comparisons revealed that somewhat more Russian students have non ethnic salient self-identifications compared to Ukrainian students, and this difference in part may be explained by the historical dominance of Russia in the region and increasing nationalism in Ukraine. (Overview of the characteristics and overlapping history of the Russian and Ukrainian groups is given in Chapter One.) Differences were also found based on gender within groups; the majority of Russian female students compared to Russian male students reported having a salient ethnic component in their identity constructions. This pattern was observed within the Ukrainian group as well, but the gender difference was not as pronounced on this dimension. However, there were only four Ukrainian male students who participated in this project. Comparisons by age of arrival indicate essentially an even distribution on this domain.

Childhood linguistic and cultural transitions in the U.S. neighborhoods and schools for most of the Eastern European immigrant students who participated in this study were difficult or traumatic. To see if the degree of emotional trauma associated with the integration into their communities may have influenced their current self-identifications percentage comparisons were made by the nature of the migration transitions that emerged from their narratives. This comparison revealed that the migration transitional experiences as an explanatory variable were not salient on this dimension since the percentage differences were small. There is considerable complexity within the narratives concerning their identity formation that cannot be readily compartmentalized by the nature of their transitions exclusively as the selected accounts will demonstrate. Arriving at meanings of evolving selves is not a straight-forward process. The examples included herein reflect the research on identity construction discussed previously that individuals draw from multiple subject positions and organize their identity claims using processes that create meaning for them. Although we cannot know how these internal and external forces influenced -identifications through them i g r a n t s comparison of their responses we can see similarities and differences in the organization of their narratives. In certain instances we can also see the tension between their asserted and ascribed identities. We found that the selected methodology of an open ended question format for the domain of identity formation was conducive in uncovering non-ethnic dimensions of identity which in many cases were more salient. If instead they had been constrained by pre-selected ethnic, national and/or racial categories, we might have ended by distinguishing them only in terms of their differences in types of ethnic identities and lost a feel for the salience of it relative to other markers. The organization of the discussion for the next two subsections on non ethnic

and ethnic self-identifications will first include the influences and then their narratives of identity claims.

***Non ethnic identities: Beyond the Nation***

To explore the potential reasons for the construction of non ethnic, national, and ethnic self-identifications the Russian and Ukrainian students were asked during the interview about what might have influenced their self-identifications. The emergent patterns found in their narratives of not being primarily identified with an ethnic or national group was influenced by emigration and transition, experiencing a shift in consciousness, degree of mutual acceptance by American and co-ethnic peers, nature of incorporation, valuing diversity, desire to be part of a global community, focus on self-improvement, and exposure to academic studies. At times they provided a simple explanation for their non or “I don't think ælf meys ne sl'f biunt e æthmeirs aen da br ærc determinants were. For example, Kalia's most possible and verbalized how emigration “erase

In terms of what the self is...one of the maybe most interesting things my mother ever said some time ago is...when we were having dinner with a friend and she asked „Oh it must have been so hard like do it? My Mom literally n her pocket and here by her had to start a new life, and my Mom was like wild because it is so true! Its like all these things that you think who you are like your family life your culture your background like everything its gone!...I think it was because my mother was so like intent on me getting assimilated into the culture so fast that like I lost like any Russian identity... (Kalia, 7, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

Other students stressed the impact of encounters of cultural diversity later in life and the broader access to the world in the United States. A shift in consciousness or development of

different mind sets connected with the emigration experience fostered non ethnic identifications, but also an altered consciousness is fostered through academic studies in an urban setting.

Being in a different place it shifted my consciousness as well...jansdt tthhen exposure to different...residential cultures here...different experiences create yourself...(Calina; 12, Age at arrival; Female, Uzbekistan).

[Global citizen] is salient through the academic work. At Victory State we learned that ah when you are in America you the Russian courses and taking Sociology touched upon a lot of different things. I learned that the world is a smaller place...that there is no longer isolation...You have access to everything in the world...so you can make any country your home I guess. It's a new phenomenon that has happened think it would have been different. I think I would have been very Ukrainian and nationalistic... (Biata; 7, Age at arrival; Female)

Other students pointed to living a life of constant transition within the U.S., or the migration experience and its uprooting causing a separation from what felt like an essential core and the swirling contexts around one. Change piled on change had left some feeling that only a non-social core remained. Thus nationalities and categories felt excessively confining, and inadequately capturing the complex self that has evolved as a result of these experiences. Some expressed that during the process of migration and difficult acculturation, they came to realize the insignificance of nationality, ethnicity and race in their social interactions with others. Initially in the U.S. context the few friendships that they were able to form predominantly were with children of different ethnic and racial backgrounds that most often also were immigrants. Some of participants commented on the incongruence fostered by the changes in their country of origin since they emigrated during childhood coupled with their own acculturation which resulted in a low level of identification with either country. In a sense these participants characterize the idea of living between two worlds, and for a few participants the return trips to

their country of origin prompted this response. Others rejected ethnic claims as they felt inadequate or as impostors of a culture they were no longer organically tied to as illustrated by

Dimitra's life of impement was frequently expressed by the U.S. T Eastern European immigrant students who arrived during childhood.

Well, because I think I grew up on my own ah without any groups so I eventually became the person that I am...I never had a certain set of friends that gave me a comfort zone that I identified myself with. My parents moved around, and my friends were always changing. So I never had a chance to get grounded anywhere...(Dimitra; 6, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

I think that ah coming from Russia and then coming to America and then assimilating into it made me realize that nation and one culture which is you know about who I am and my individual self and my individual inter at like that.nugget of And it it myself that is like still myself no matter speaking...I think it's looking back on who what is...still true from thenweto who I am keep revolving and changing...(Lena; 12, Age

Arman's account illustrates a variant of participant's family to optional idy n t i f i c a t i o n category.

My family never really imposed an ethnic or religious identity upon me...although it really was always like a girl would carry Jewish names or whatever but it would never like to punish me...She always reasoned with it's because I said so...I think it's because even ah affirmation and that's why I can't ethnicity...Honest cause one ethnicity to choose one I want would be to say well this is it...This is what values to me just because I said this one remain flexible in that ostablers almost any just allow situation...(Arman, 10, Age at arrival; Male

My mother is a very open-minded person, and very helpful also. My grandparents brought me up and shared their knowledge you know...the religious aspect...My motly my grandfather they are Jewish so I had that

come together. But I'm not really a religious Cabalist... It's a science ah for the... the meaning question, „Why am I here (Ukraine).. (Akim, 9, Age

The philosophy of self-improvement, emerging oneself in a role, or possessing a valued attribute was central to the self-concept of six participants. Ivan held the standpoint that he needed to accomplish in order to represent Russia well.

I always see people take great pride in their own ethnic background. They hang up their own flag. I think it's a false pride rather than just take pride in where you come from you know because I mean I can be proud of Russia all I want but ah I didn't around... I wasn't the first man in a space if somebody looks at me and says oh he's Russian well but I would not ah look at Russia and say Russia represent (Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

The following cases illustrate the justifications or themes that are presented in opposition to claiming a narrow ethnic or foreign identity. Many claim that such identities are too narrow, or prefer a transcendent global one or a religious one, and sometimes the claim is narrowly occupational but trumps all others nonetheless. Overall, they share a profound reluctance and/or ambivalence about basing their sense of self either by their country of origin or the nation of the U.S. While they as white immigrants are able to transcend ethnicity and race in their identity claims by selecting non ethnic/racial components in their constructed self-identifications, at the same time the inculcation of their place of birth seems to prevent a full incorporation of an exclusive American identity.

The Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students expressed different identity claims associated with the influences that they had identified during the interviews. Half of the respondents elected a self-identification that reflected a sense of cosmopolitanism and an anti-ethnic/national stance. Through the responde

be gained about the process of their identity constructions. To illustrate, Adrik expressed during the interview the ongoing “struggle” with choosing “liberating.”

Well I guess the biggest is stop thinking that I'm fixated about my identity. It's an issue that I have at times... If I was able to identify easily with it right now, but since I can't find one... norms of a certain culture. You can explore not necessarily Russian. You don't have to like Russian culture... It's liberating... (Adrik);

Adrikative is reflective of an organizing element that reflects his concern over not being able to identify with an ethnic or national group and which has led him to a beneficial position of not being locked in by any one identity.

In a similar vein, participants described having identities “fluid” or having the ability to “morph” into their translations of self were reflected in the narratives of a third of the participants who represent the easy, difficult and traumatic categories. The narratives of Arman and Ilina illustrate this approach in the construction of their identity claims. However, whereas Arman has developed an adaptive self-perception for different types of environments, Ilina reflects national dualities since she is a citizen of America and Russia. Nonetheless, they share an organizing element of transcending the potentially confining labels of ethnicity, race and nationality that has been fostered through the necessity of learning how to adapt to an unfamiliar environment.

When I think about that it depends on where scenario... I see myself as flexible. I see different environments very quickly! And rather than being you know restrained by one I want to be able to jump into other

look at different perspectives all the time arrival; Male, Uzbekistan).

And you know it's really easy for me to really morph into that culture once I'm there [Russia]. It is easy to act like an American you know I don't think a lot of people would know that I'm from Russia just by looking at me or talking to me you know...I don't have an accent...I am an American citizen. I have a citizenship in Russia also... (Irina; 9, Age at arrival;

Other participants who perceived themselves being affiliated solely with any one ethnic group discussed that their heritage is part of their self-perceptions. Such constructs indicate in part that while embracing cosmopolitanism, the subject position of immigrant and the culture of origin exert an influence in the selection of identity components. This is illustrated by the narrative also reflects the influences of traveling and living in other cultures in conjunction with his immigration experience.

I see myself as a global citizen which I am proud to say because it's important to me. Ah not only does it define who I am in how I dress in how I walk in how I speak in how I act, but also my Russian heritage in part is who I am...(Biata; 7, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

Well, I would definitely say that I am a citizen of the world. I hesitate to classify myself. I don't know whether that is because of open-mindedness or whether my broad mindedness. I have traveled to France to England. I was born in Russia. I have lived in America. I felt at home wherever I have been. So ah that justifies my stand. Ah we all ought to be more respectful to each other, and as long as we see each other as human beings that's the reason. (Ayk; 19, Age at arrival; Ukraine).

There were six Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students who selected a role or personal attribute as the most important aspect in how they identify. Resistance to being confined by any type of label guided their identity choices. Grigor emigrated at the beginning of adolescence and

Petrov in kindergarten; both of the narratives of their migration transitional experiences were profound.

Well I definitely got to say my mode I am a nurse a guess. Let me put it this way. I function in that mode. I know what is expected of me and I try to fulfill it to the best of my abilities. I know that I probably am a future nurse also and ah I like helping people and that is who I am...(Grigor; 14, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

My identity? ... You know before I might have bit I'm intellectually inclined I wouldn't nowadays... I'm a musician. my s... (P... 5, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

For other students personal attributes were salient in the construction of their self. This was the case for Sergei and Stefan whose narratives about their incorporation stories also included profound aspects.

I'd say that I'm confident in myself because I don't know how to describe myself... (Sergei;

A friend ah observant, caring in [certain] Male, Russia).

The isolation stemming from the inability to establish close friendships during the transition resulted in Dima's life threatening found spirituality led to a conversion experience from Judaism to Christianity; she wears the Star of David which Dima explained symbolizes her "faith." - Many friends construct she's... was the most salient aspect. However, she also has incorporated an ethnic component in her self-construction that is associated with the culture she has experienced in the post-Communist era.

Well I would have to say that the number one thing is I am a daughter of God. I am (name) I am a sister, a daughter, I am someone God. I truly believe that and I assume that everything stems from that. And He

is my center ah I see it like that... I consider myself Russian. I know the Russian language... I don't consider myself because I don't speak the language although U.S.S.R. I am assuming I ah that change did not you know bridge through my mind... (Dimas; 8, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine)

Identifying as an "American student" reflects the tension between ethnic and non-ethnic identity in Katya's narrative. The transition from Ukraine, changing political affiliations, and language usage factor into her decision-making process have created confusion in identity formation.

I kind of like lump everything together... when I say Russian but then I'm like but should I say what to say cause I was born here but now that it had split off should I say Ukrainian? But I don't know! Like if somebody says I usually say Russian and then if they ask me more questions then I'll like most of the people that I know that identify themselves as Russian from Kiev so it seems like people from there ah but I didn't know... like I was thinking like a Russian but I was like well I identify myself like I'm an American and I don't think so. That is a very hard question for an American student... (Katya; 5, Age at arrival)

Inessa expressed that she is "more American" in her identity formation of being "someone to be proud of" because she became increasingly patriotic to America since this national identity in his case is being Jewish.

Like mostly what I value here is the freedom of identity which is something that you don't even get there... In the U.S. as a country you're very loyal American citizen you know I love America because of what it stands for which is like freedom. It is actually real freedom! Like in a lot of European countries say take France for example. They say they're a free democratic country right but they have freedom of religion there. But

really have the true freedom of identity... (Ukraine).

Markov's religious identity construction was also influenced by his trips to Israel; it made a significant impression on him as it did for some of the other students who were reclaiming Judaism in America after experiencing secularism and anti-Semitism. For Markov these journeys to Israel, his studies on campus with the Rabbi, and his own activism have been the greatest influences in his self-identification. Being a Jew is central to his identity and Ukraine only factors in as a place where he once lived.

I do a lot of work for Victory State Students for Israel cause I feel really strongly that I should be doing this and I've been move there... I'll probably graduate in a couple citizenship there ah live there maybe for a year or two at the most. I will see how it goes and I'll probably try to establish probably come back here where life is better... As long as I can survive I mean I don't want to be rich or middle class just as long as I get by and stuff. What is important to me is spirituality and religion. (Age at arrival; Male, Ukraine).

### *Ethnic Identity Constructions*

Students who did claim ethnic self-identification often stressed distinct familial cultural practices and emphasized the importance of collective memory or of honoring the immigrant struggle of their parents. An ethnic identity claim was often an affirmation of those parental bonds, the essential fact that they were born in another country, the concerted cultural maintenance by the participant and/or through family traditions, a tribute to the courage of parents and shared immigration struggle, awareness of beginning to think in English, return visits to the country of origin, experiences on a diverse campus, trips to Israel, socialization in the post-Communist era, ascription by others or a combinations of these influences. According to a few

participants their place of birth or cultural heritage is synonymous with their identity and could not be altered by living in any other context.

T h e r e w a s n o t a n y i n f l u e n c e . I j u s t t o l d y o u (Alexis; 10, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

I think it's what I brought with me. I always identified as R u s s i a n... (Alexis; 10, Age at arrival; Female, Belarus).

M o m a l w a y s s a i d w e r e J e w i s h...A n d y o u r e p r o b a b l y f r o m a h o l d i n g M o m s s i d e o f t h e f a m i l y p e o p l e d i e d J e w i s h d i e d i n t h e c o n c e n t r a t i o n c a m p s a n d m y D a d s M o m s t i l l h a s h e r a n d s h e w a s o n e o f t h e g i r l s i n t h e c o n c e n t r a t i o n c a m p (Alexis; 10, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

An ethnic sense of self was reaffirmed or instilled in the U.S. context by the family history, the immigrant struggle that participants shared with their parents, and an admiration for t h e i r p a r e n t s c o u r a g e .

I t s j u s t I g u e s s —m y p a r e n t s b e i n g c o u r a g e o u s p e o p l e m y p a r e n t s w h o w a n t e d u s t o h a v e b e t t e r l i v e s a n d t h a t r e a l l y m a k e s m e e m b r a c e t h e f a c t t h a t I a m R u s s i a n . M y p a r e n t s a r e R u s s i a n a n d w h e n w e m o v e d h e r e i t w a s s u c h h a r d t i m e s y o u k n o w i t w a s s o d i f f i c u l t f o r s o m a n y y e a r s... (Eleni; 8, Age at arrival; Female, Uzbekistan).

For others it was not birth or socialization alone that dictated their ethnic self-identifications but a consequence of concerted maintenance of their parents culture, and ongoing “ i d e n t i t y w o r k ” t h e y p e r f o r m e d t o l e g i t i m i z e t h e i r i d e n t i t y . s h e h a s t a k e n t o m a i n t a i n h e r R u s s i a n i d e n t i t y a n d h o w t h e s e c u l t u r a l a s p e c t s h a v e c h a n g e d s i n c e h e r e m i g r a t i o n .

I think in part due to I mean I listen to Russian music like on New Year. You d o n t h e a r a l o t o f R u s s i a n s s p e a k i n g . . . i n t h e U S . I a m v e r y c o n n e c t e d w i t h i t b e c a u s e o f m y b a c k g r o u n d a n d I t r y t o l i s t e n t o R u s s i a n m u s i c o n l i n e . . . b u t i t s k i n d o f a d i s c o n n e c t i o n . I c a n r e m e m b e r... (Galina; 10, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

Becoming aware that her processes were now in English rather than in Russian gave Iliina pause and she reassessed her self-identification.

It's hard to say it's weird because you know think in Russian but now I think in English know I'm more American... it really depends on the situation you know. If I was in Russia I really would not be a oh I'm Russian I'm Russian do you know where I am and since I'm American... (Iliina; 9th Age at arrival; guess I am a Female, Russia).

The students during the interviews often talked about the different types of Russians and Ukrainians on campus that they had met as well as the Eastern European neighborhoods that existed where the cultural traditions were practiced. Although Valerik still acknowledges his Russian heritage, he stated that he “feels” more in the Russian culture constantly.

Yeah it kind of continues to be but I feel more of an American now. It's [there] the way I feel is more American... my York... there is a large Russian community. I feel like I'm an American and they are Russian for a trip, but you know they go there that's almost like Russia... (Valerik; 5, Age

The emigration from Ukraine, distance between Ukraine and the United States, and formal independence of Ukraine serve as a self-identification reinforcement since she was raised as a “nationalist” according

It is stronger... I think the fact that I'm traditions are amplified because you try not to forget them and you know you try to hold on to every single one that you have the Ukrainian community here you know that feel of like Ukraine and like when you do the Ukrainians they don't let you forget it. It keeps you more Ukrainian than what you were my grandfather both of my great grandfathers my Mom's family and my Dad's family were my Mom's grandparents who always told me the

the war was you know. I was raised very patriotic...(Dessa; 13, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

Family traditions learned from her grandmother, and the nationalism that is conveyed by friends in Ukraine through correspondence con-  
The racial component in her self-concept has been instilled by the required U.S. forms that always include race categories.

What influenced me to call myself Ukrainian are some maternal grandmother taught me. I would do what I do because my Grandma taught me so that ties me into that. Some of her cooking...And just when only on the applications when that is always they ask you for your background...I was born don't know what is the word to use national friends... (Larisa; 7, Age at arrival; Female)

The influences identified in the students narratives self-identifications that also included variation. Influences connected with childhood migration challenges, and the emotions engendered during the difficult phase of acculturation are reflected in some of the participants narratives. Whereas Eleni has chosen Russian identity within the current diverse environment, Katarina increasingly is becoming attached to her Ukrainian way of life. Eleni by mainstream peers as she has because of the denigration of Russians and no narrative projected a childhood that was particularly taxing because of the shared immigrant struggle within her home and she continues to prefer the life style in Ukraine.

When I moved here I guess I was afraid to let them know that I am Russian and I didn't really identify myself with them. Americanized I still have like that Russian culture and language...(Eleni, 8, Age at arrival; Female, Uzbekistan).

Some people ask me and like my answer is a become assimilated. I've become like...nature

too and I'm happy about it but yeah I mean I would want to go back... (Kat 7, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

Nearly half of the 34 Eastern European students reported that they were Jewish based on their heritage and/or religion. Since as a group they had experienced living in a secular society where Jewish people were viewed as a national group it was of interest to see how the students identified in the U.S. context. Identification, six students and of those five had multiple components within their identity claims. In three of these cases Jewish was seen as the most salient component and placed first. To illustrate, Jelena identified herself as “Jewish American Russian” and cons transitioned in a supportive Jewish community. In contrast, Lukas and neighborhood was more problematic; he has a different order in his layered ethnic self-identification. Through the participants and their multiethnic American identity claims were not random, but reflect a deliberative process.

In America I think there's more ah there's more interconnection you know between the different identities. So you can be American. You can be Jewish and you can be Russian. So I would definitely say that here, but ah if I had to say the three components that make up my identity it would be American, Jewish and Russian in that order. (Male, Russia)

The complexity of layered ethnic identity construction is also reflected in the accounts of students who included American mainstream and non-ethnic elements in their self-identifications. In her country of origin Adleta had experienced blatant anti-Semitism and in the U.S. the transition was difficult. The salient component of her identity has always been Jewish but the pre-emigration and incorporation in the U.S. has impacted her layered identity formation. Fedorova is also Jewish and she was not subjected to the same level of anti-Semitism as Adleta.

profound discriminatory acts in her first country and had an easy transition in the U.S. Whereas during the interview Adleta expressed emphatically her disassociation with Ukraine in her identity formation, Fedorova presented the ethnic elements in her self-identification under consideration in neutral terms.

When we were growing up it was always rein are Jewish. You can't get rid of it. That proud to be Ukrainian. So, because to me everything back there was about hating somebody else so...I'm an American Jew and I'm from Ukraine. That's the only thing I can say that I'm from there!...I'm also multilingual and multicultural...(Adleta; 11, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

What I call my speaking Jew from Ukraine, but y& Russian definitely consider myself being more Russian than Ukrainian...I mean it always changes the way I identify with just little things, but for the most part I just identify myself as this just friendly person to try to like impress me with something a want to not be friends with a person who matter to me really! If you are a good person I will like you...(Fedorova; 9, Age at arrival; Female; Ukraine).

Salient ethnic self-identification is context dependent and/or ascribed for a few Russian and Ukrainian students. Vadim can pass as either American or Russian and has, therefore, developed a fluid component in his identity that is in part due to ascription.

That would vary from day to day. If I'm with Russians I would be seen more as Russian because in their minds I am... It is situational...(Vadim; 9,

It was rare for the Eastern European immigrant students to incorporate race in their salient identity formation. However, Eva, who had been subjected to prejudice and discrimination both in Ukraine and in the U.S., explained that it was important for her to be pragmatic and include "white American" in the

that being white and American is the same thing and it enhances acceptance since race compared to religion and nationality is more visible. The saliency of negative emotions experienced by Eva during the childhood cultural transition may continue to influence her practical decision-making process in the construction of a self-identification that facilitates entrance into the American mainstream. Although she had included “Russian” not as significant for her.

I never felt like writing it in [on forms] but now I think I am Caucasian and just the assimilation of culture you know I think like after being in the culture I definitely felt like I was Caucasian that there was no reason you know to ~~sicilian~~ ~~al mean~~ myself and nationality matters but I'm just proud to in comparison to religion and nationality European you are going to be considered a white and people are going to accept you more unfortunately than if you are from I sometimes it depends on context as well, but right now you know I remember I was saying I am a Russian Jew but I don't particularly an I Am a Jew (Eva; m10, Age at a Ukraine).

The immigrant students identity construct Only four participants reported that they and their parents shared the same self-identification; two Russian, one Ukrainian, and one Jewish. Moreover, at times the participant retained the identity of origin and the parent became “American” identification was “global” and she reported. Students with a Jewish heritage expressed that they and their family members placed different emphasis on being Jewish within their constructed self-identifications.

### **Return Trips to the Country of Origin**

Frequent return trips to the country of origin exerts a powerful effect on self-perceptions but the Eastern European immigrant students in this investigation did not typify the pattern of

trans-nationalism characterized by the dominant practice of retaining dual citizenship with its manifestation in maintaining social, economic and cultural ties (Portes and DeWind; 2007, 2008:9). Only half of the participants had taken at least one return trip to their country of origin, and of the 17 who have not done so 13 expressed that they plan to visit. Although the students had emigrated during childhood a persistent interest remains in their first country to varying degrees. However, the accounts of the overwhelming majority of the Eastern European immigrant students demonstrate that incorporation in the United States has occurred to the extent that they could not foresee returning to live permanently in their country of origin. At the same time, their childhood emigration and predominantly emotionally challenging acculturation and integration in the U.S. context for most of the Russian and Ukrainian participants has made an imprint on the persons that they have become as the discussion in Chapter Seven indicates.

### **Discussion**

The Russian and Ukrainian participants who emigrated during their childhood reported that their socialization in the first country and transitions in the U.S. influenced their current self-identifications, perspectives, values, and their interaction patterns to different extents. A prevalence of hybrid non ethnic and layered ethnic and multiethnic American self-identifications was found in their narratives of the easy, difficult and traumatic transitioners. Consequently, the comparisons of emergent patterns in their identity constructions indicated that the nature of the migration transition could not fully explain the respondents associated their development of self, perspectives, and nature of their integration primarily to their migration transitional experiences, but at other times in the interview they discussed the impact of the urban campus environment, academic programs, and study abroad

experiences. Whereas the influence of the migration transition was pronounced in the comparisons on other dimensions of adaptation on the university campus, the topic of the next chapter, the differences between the cases for identity claims and integration experiences were small. These comparisons suggest that there were also other effects that contribute in explicating this complex phenomenon of identity formation for child migrants from Eastern Europe. At the same time, the influence of the emotional import of disruption of a critical childhood development stage as a result of migration and ensuing acculturation within peer contexts of reception is an important consideration in the self-perceptions and adaptations for the participants in this study.

The phenomenon of rare mainstream American self-identification within the Eastern European immigrant study explained through this exploration cannot. Nonetheless, it is possible to discuss the prevalent perspectives that Russian and Ukrainian participants strongly and consistently voiced during the interviews at different times associated with their perceived immigrant status. Without exception they described themselves as “immigrants” and not as members of the “second generation” during childhood since they have been inculcated to varying degrees from having lived in the former Soviet Union and migrated to the U.S. Furthermore, the shared struggle with their parents during integration reinforced their standpoint that they were all immigrants although each family member may have had unique experiences. Comparisons of self-identifications between the Russian and Ukrainian participants and their parents suggest overall individualistic identity formation within the homes rather than a dominant ethnic identity. Although the parents most often possessed an ethnic identification, mothers and

f a t h e r s   a t   t i m e s   h a d   d i f f e r e n t   i d e n t i t i e s ,   a n d  
single or mixed identity even in a few instances when the participants did not.

Overall, the students that talked with me did not distinguish themselves from their parents and foreign-born siblings by any type of generational gradation. Instead, they talked about the different roles family members had within the household with many reporting having assumed adult roles during the integration. Predominantly, the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students in this study differentiated themselves from their native-born American peers—including their siblings who were born in the U.S. Moreover, the next chapter will include a discussion about the rare social mixing practices on campus between the participants and the second-generation youth who share their ethnic background. Consequently, the emergent patterns found within the participants' narratives support the perspective that taking into account a child's foreign birth, age at arrival, developmental stage and associated emotions when this childhood developmental stage is disrupted because of migration would have utility when investigating outcomes for child migrants.

When the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students selected an ethnic self-identification it often included their country of origin or a multi ethnic American identity that was composed of three ethnic components with salient layers of fluidity and situation. Although there were many variables that could account for these constructs, this phenomenon was elucidated to a certain extent through comparison of responses by the participants about their experiences and cultural transitions in their first neighborhoods and schools within the U.S. The tension of ascription and assertion of identities were played out in hospitable and hostile environments that exerted their own particular influence on the self-perceptions of the immigrant children. The

effect of these experiences, coupled with the connection to their country of birth, seem to have shaped their self-perceptions. However, a third of the participants, regardless of their identity formation, stated that they had become Americanized and/or were an American citizen.

Additionally, some of the participants had experienced because they were not born in the U.S. The students with most traumatic transitional experiences least often made references to “America” in their national identity constructions. While many factors could account for this reaction their narratives suggest that messages given by peers of “not belonging” or in their lack of identification with the national identity.

Since there was a discernible shift from the ethnic or national self-identifications in their countries of origin toward layered ethnic and non-ethnic self-identifications in their narratives, the patterns do not seem to reflect the phenomenon with race where the shift by nonwhite adolescents was toward national origin identities due to the “confrontation with an adverse environment and the need to create new solidarities to counter it (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001:284). In contrast, only a few of the participants in this study maintained solely their national or ethnic origin identities. In part this outcome may be explained by race since whites have historically not encountered the discrimination based on race as the nonwhite population and, instead, have had ethnic options for their identity constructions (Waters, 1990). However, in some instances the participants had recounted experiences of prejudice due to their ambiguous race and/or their ethnicity, and many have recounted negative experiences associated with their immigrant status. Concomitantly, the reaction to their peer context of reception may be manifested differently for the Russian and

Ukrainian immigrant students in the prevalence of construction of complex self-identifications that either are non ethnic or include a layer in their ethnic or ethnic American construction that is situational or fluid. The overarching characteristic in their self-perceptions as a group is adaptability to different social environments narratives about their transitional experiences were prominent themes of exclusion by mainstream peers as well as with co-ethnics who had emigrated before them. Some of the participants expressed emotions of anger, frustration and sadness during the interview when discussing their memories of the migration transition especially when they were stigmatized and became the targets of prejudice and discrimination. Consequently, mixing the various components of their ethnic heritage with American citizenship or abandoning all ethnic forms of identification might be reflected in their constructs of layered ethnic identities and/or is a reaction to society's response and ascription also a pattern of remembering the denigration of their culture during the transition and then regaining pride in the ethnicity of origin in a multi-cultural context where it was valued. When taking these patterns into account in relationship with the prevalent saliency of immigrant status for this group, it is possible that both self-perception and ascription of the participants as "immigrants into the selection of both non-ethnic and ethnic identity constructions. Immigrants are also marginalized by society which may be reflective of being designated to an indeterminate position. Those who have incorporated this dimension within their emerging self may not be inclined to commit to any concrete identity element. And it is possible that such a reaction is more likely among migrant children who additionally had not yet formed an identity

within their country of origin prior to departure and then struggled for belonging within the peer contexts during their acculturation.

It is also possible that their identification is at least in part consciously or subconsciously related to their foreign birth status and the concomitant distinction embedded in the U.S. constitution between naturalized Americans and native-born Americans. Even if a naturalized American citizen had arrived on the American shores moments after their birth she/he will never be able to hold the highest office of the United States. The primary rationale for this constitutional law is rooted in the idea that loyalty to the nation stems from loyalty to the soil where one takes his/her first breath despite historical contradictory evidence. However, this sentiment remains strong and is reflected in the current extreme conservative voices within the population whose aim is to delegitimize the Presidency of Barack Obama on unfounded charges that he was not born in the U.S. Foreign birth status taken together with other relevant variables in future research may elucidate the complex process of identity formation among foreign-born children in the U.S. where it is not salient, qualified or non-existent in their multilayered ethnic and non ethnic self-identifications. Overall, the patterns that were also other dimensions linked to the specific circumstances connected with their experiences as child migrants and the often negative emotions engendered during their acculturation process. That is, disruption of the school age developmental stage as a result of migration and the ensuing emotional acculturation in the U.S. context within peer contexts of reception may foster long-term effects. When the Eastern European immigrant students were asked if there were enduring

influences on the persons they have become as a result of their childhood migration experiences all but one student responded affirmatively. This finding stands in contrast to the prevalent assumptions on the effects of early migration.

In the next chapter we will examine emergent patterns found in their narratives that pertain to their adaptation pathways on an urban university campus in relationship to the nature of their childhood migration transitions and associated emotions. Percentage comparisons will be included on selected dimensions when considering the migration typology of easy, difficult and traumatic cases.

## CHAPTER 7

### ADAPTATION ON AN URBAN UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

*Q j " K " n q x g " X k e v q t { " U v c v g # " " V j g t g ø u " u q " o w e j " and just people of different ethnic groups that there is no such thing n k m g " { q w ø t g " f k h h g t g p v 0 " " N k m g " f k h h g t g p v " k u " i q q f " j g t g # " " of new friends from like different cultures...(Katarina; 7, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).*

In the previous chapter we explored the constructed self-identification patterns that emerged from the Eastern European immigrant participants adaptation pathways on the urban to different studies, concepts, people and experiences. As in the previous chapters the Russian and Ukrainian participants narratives of the experiences on campus, but it is acknowledged that individuals may employ various processes in the construction of meanings associated with recalled past, present and imagined future events (Vila, 2000; 2005). Since the research on the emigration, transition and adjustment of the foreign born children is limited, and since there is a need for explicating the experiences of this population it is important to learn of their standpoint contests the prevalent-held notion in academia that they are not actually immigrants by virtue that they were children at the time of arrival, and that their own experiences in the first country and during the migration transition are not salient. That is, child migrants are typically assessed as either having assimilated to such an extent that they are indistinguishable from American-born children or they may reflect the par

Instead, the Eastern European students that participated in this study viewed themselves as

immigrants despite having arrived during childhood, and with rare exception held that these recalled experiences have impacted the persons they have become.

Herein we will consider the Russian and Uk their adaptation on an urban university campus. We will discuss their accounts of general adjustment on campus, their social interaction patterns with students on campus, their co-ethnic relationships, viewpoints of privileged and disadvantaged groups, and their attitudes toward race. In addition to exploring these dimensions of their campus experiences, I will also analyze how the nature of their early migration experiences might relate to these outcomes since their acculturation during childhood seems to have engendered powerful emotions.

As with other contemporary university environments, the campus of this project has been transformed by a growth of immigrant students. Although all of the immigrants of this project were socialized in primarily racially homogeneous societies in their first countries, in the U.S. context they have experienced ethnic and racial diversity in their neighborhoods and/or schools at various times during their childhood. However, a few have lived in predominantly suburban white neighborhoods and attended high schools where most of the students were white prior to entering the multi-cultural urban university campus. Regardless of the differences in ethnic and racial compositions of social spaces that they had encountered, these participants expressed positive viewpoints regarding diversity and had sought out a university marked by diversity.

When the Eastern European immigrant students joined a multicultural collegiate community, they embodied traits shaped by life events that were shared by other students as well as by their experiences related to childhood migration and transitions in the U.S. context. According to their narratives, they were predominantly self-motivated due to the immigrant

struggle they shared with their parents, had primarily negative migration transitional experiences and isolation, and essentially positive high school memories of integration and socialization, arrived at the university with excellent high school academic records and embraced ethnic and racial diversity.

Our past findings revealed a range of experiences among these immigrants in terms of the memories of the difficulty of the early migration occurrence; some remembered the transition as traumatic, others as not difficult and others somewhere in between. As has been discussed previously, emotions are influential in directing human action, and it has been found that children who have had their lives altered dramatically, such as in the divorce of their parents, have experienced long-term effects. Here we want to explore whether current social adjustments during the college years relate in any meaningful way to the differential impact of these early migration and acculturation experiences (or at least the recollections of them). To elucidate this possibility the narrative accounts were grouped into three categories of migratory experiences: a) remembered transitions that were easy or relatively easy (N=6); b) remembered transitions that were difficult (N=12) and c) remembered transitions that were traumatic (N=16) transitions. To systematize our comparisons in the analysis, this typology was constructed based on the overall nature of the participants childhood linguistic narratives and then compared to their responses given to questions on different dimensions at various times during the interview. Although the methodology utilized in this study cannot explicate causality in terms of how they view their present adjustment and those early experiences, we may nonetheless explore correlations between characterizations of current campus adjustments and their memories of early migratory experiences as overall easy, difficult

or traumatic migration transitions. We now turn to analyzing the themes about their social adjustments of students in their college environments in terms of this typology.

### **Challenges on the Urban University Campus**

As noted earlier with few exceptions the Russian and Ukrainian students had experienced positive changes during their high school years. During the interview the students were asked to describe the most meaningful aspects of their college experience so far. Their narratives included descriptions of such aspects as their academic progress, activities, and socialization experiences. When the students encountered the new context on the urban university campus they responded to it differentially, and their narratives reflected a range of responses. The reasons for the variation in their narratives could be associated with features intrinsic to the new urban university context but could be an expression of the lingering impact of early transition experiences that continue to impact adult adjustment or at least the way they tend to see the present as a result of those past memories.

The students with easy or relatively easy transitions more often reported that their challenges were essentially typical adjustments college students have to make such as balancing studying with social life and living away from home for the first time.

Collectively, the Eastern European students were enthusiastic about many aspects of their academic and social life on the urban university campus. We concentrate here on those dimensions of their university experiences such as social, cultural and language issues that they had identified in their narratives. The typology of degrees of difficulty of childhood migration was used to compare their responses on a range of issues they discussed related to college adjustments. Of the less than a third of the students who discussed lingering challenges with their

social adjustments in college, they predominantly were those who had reported traumatic migration transitions in childhood associated with painful social interactions within peer contexts of reception in the U.S. Some of their identified challenges on campus included connecting with other mainstream students, co-ethnics, understanding the American culture and the English language. We will illustrate this point with several typical cases of social struggles among the “traumatic” as well as present a couple of exceptions such that students found the benefits of a diverse campus helped them overcome some early social problems. Dimitra who had a traumatic migratory transition and had been isolated when she arrived at age six in her home, neighborhood, and school, stressed her difficulties on campus relate to her not connecting readily with students in general and in particular not finding a source of communion with other Russian students on campus who she found to be “ignorant.” Given that the only met at a Russian camp this lack of options meant she was mostly socially isolated.

I guess since I generally have experienced being detached from the student life...and in social instances I think that I have had social development issues where I didn't make anything that is interesting to me that even friends and they actually do isolate themselves too, and that probably contributes a lot to my conceptual isolation...which is friends and I tend to be friends with Russians. I went to Russian camp...a lot of my friends are from there...we all hang out in New York and go to Russian performances... (but) at Victory State all know how valid it is but they're just very Brooklyn Russians are more like from middle Europe...And the Jewish Russians they have their own people...a whole different kind of adaptation...It's not Russia it's not America it's just a weird place...(Dimitra; 6, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

Dimitra's narrative with memories of a traumatic childhood migration transition but find themselves struggling to establish a satisfying social life on campus. In her

particular case she also distanced herself from co-ethnics on campus from a separate immigration stream and/or who are assimilating differently.

Stefan, also a “traumatic” transitioner of described ongoing and unresolved relationship issues and feelings of essentially being an “outcast” in the outside world is linked to his self-perception but also to his not having dedicated enough time for socialization during his college years. In response to these perceived social adjustment failures, he recently developed a systematic approach to rectify his social circumstances that he connected to his personal history of cultural and linguistic transition. The following dialogue with Stefan conveys the intensity of his concern as well as the detailed thought out steps taken to consciously change his appearance and personality in order to improve his social interaction.

That's one of the things that I did wrong come in the morning and attend my classes. I would do work for the organizations...again during the four years that I was doing my undergrad there were not many social interactions of any kind consider college days time to expand, time to live your life, and time to define who you really are I did not a lot. Obviously if a... And so you stay in college that's when you develop problems with language and always had... I to. In my opinion it was those constraints social it was about my social ability... and I was old enough problems. Ah and that's when I realized that And my personality change goes from as simple as overall ah change in my appearance to the sort of refurbishing my mind—the social and my past struggling with figuring this thing out. Ah changing my attire changing my looks is probably the easiest thing... this group of myself to socialize with them to hang around with them... So social ah overhaul... exchanging with them, a interact I started updating my entire appearance. Ah and as I was saying over time like I would always ask for an opinion about the looks. You always have to ask what looks better this or that? As an engineer we give opinions about what design will work, and in that department I the gym. I started going to the hair barber and I did start changing my outlook, but

the social aspect ah the overall aspect of part because social skills are best developed know this remains I guess my biggest challenge to ah this day is just being able to stay on top of my fears... (Stefan; 14, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

Most of the students narratives reflected was not unexpected given the time they have been socialized in the U.S. Yet, there were students who still were challenged with understanding the American culture and they were those who had depicted traumatic experiences in their narratives. Being on the university campus provided Adrik with opportunities to increase his understanding of the American culture.

I love the fact that I'm on the Main Campus exposure to the American culture and because things that I probably would have picked up had my parents been born in America...(Adrik; 6, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

Although all of the students regardless of their transitions were proficient in English, there were a few who had difficult or traumatic transitions that reported either still working on building their vocabulary or working hard to overcome deficiencies in English composition. Biata, as an example, who had described a traumatic transition within her narrative expressed that she did not become aware of certain linguistic patterns until recently.

Academically I struggled with English even though I love to read and write papers I still struggled with those transition sentences and things like that were an effort for me... I just learned to attribute was working with \_\_\_ \_\_, a professor at Victory State are things that she picks up that I don't than she does and it is because of the language barrier that I am now starting to actually acknowledge... (Biata; 7, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

It is not entirely clear as to why Biata's de has occurred or if this is something typical among other child immigrants. Yet, at the same time, there may have been a linguistic impact during the period of English language acquisition related

to the long-term depression that Biata experienced associated with homesickness and isolation by mainstream peers in her pre-college years. We see something similar with Katarina who reported how she had refused to speak English after she acquired it because of the emotions that she felt due to the rejection by American peers and the insensitivity of her teacher in her first

U.S. school. These recalled experiences by Biata and Katarina may be reflective of "selective mutism" identified among the child migrant population.

...Although sudden immersion and its nonverbal communication aspects are highly dependent on environmental support and the temperamental characteristics of the child, selective mutism typically lasts longer, appears in both languages and unfamiliar situations, and tends to be difficult to overcome with language exposure and competence. The prevalence of selective mutism appears to be, however, higher among immigrant dual language children, and it is thus important that the clinician be familiar with features that differentiate selective mutism from the normal nonverbal period... (Tager-Flusberg & Paul, 1999, p. 100)

Of those whose narratives reflected an overall easy migration transition, we find very different themes, mostly not stressing difficult social adjustments. Kalia was the only one of the non-traumatic transitioners who mentioned having challenges on the campus; i.e, difficulty connecting with other college students. The advice to speak English and learn English as quickly as possible served her well in early years, but on the diverse university campus she struggled with finding social groups that she could identify with. She wondered if the rapid assimilation that was encouraged and the simultaneous loss of her first culture during the transition were making an impact now.

### **Social Interaction Patterns on the Urban University Campus**

An important issue in much of the immigration literature that focuses on racial diversity is the question of how immigrants will position themselves within dominant racial divisions in the United States. Given the context of our study this issue must be translated in terms of how

immigrant students position themselves within the ethnic racial cleavages they find on college campuses. While there is considerable literature about what students say about diversity on campus, there is relatively little that addresses the actual interaction patterns students adopt as they interact on multicultural campuses and how they navigate the social choices they make. Fortunately for my project, there is a study that raises these issues in terms of Latino and Asian immigrants on the same campus of this project that can serve as a comparison point for the Russian and Ukrainian immigrants of this project. The concerns of that project did not include the impact of childhood migration issues so the points of comparison will begin with the actual socialization patterns of the groups before turning to the issue of how early migratory patterns may or may not play a role. To elucidate this understudied phenomenon, Grasmuck and Kim (2010) analyzed the social mixing practices of students at Victory State through in-depth interviews with Latino, Indian, and Vietnamese second-generation immigrant students as well as a comparison group of native-born African Americans. Their exploration was structured by a contrast between two visions of multiculturalism either of which hypothetically could have been at play as ethno-racial groups were incorporated into existing diversity on campus. They explored the nature of the pluralistic patterns of strong ethnic clustering evident across the campus. Drawing on a typology offered by Hartman and Gerteis (2005) they raised the question of whether pluralism would be expressed predominantly in a fragmented or interactive form or the nature of the boundaries the immigrants created between themselves and whites and native minorities on campus.

... F r a g m e n t e d p l u *interactions and affirming solidarities* e s s  
*within ethno-racial groups* , w h o s e m e m b e r s t o l e r a t e a n d e n  
 group rights. In contrast, interactive pluralism would emphasize *interactions*  
*between groups* whose members achieve a broader solidarity by participating in

an emergent campus culture built on the qu  
(Grasmuck and Kim, 2010:225).

The researchers found that about half of the students of multi-racial and ethnic groups (referred to as “minority mixers”) appeared to be primarily socialized with co-ethnics (P241). That is, while one half of the students in three of the four ethno-racial minority groups they studied primarily socialized with co-ethnics, one third of the students of each group engaged in salient cross-racial socialization on campus. In the case of the Hispanics, the one group with a small number of co-ethnics on campus, approximately half of them mixed predominantly with African Americans “minority mixers” with the others mixed primarily with co-ethnics. These findings are of significance because they are restricted to immigrants who have been racialized in the U.S. context as non-white and hence the question of how their socializing reinforces or disrupts the color line was central. However, that project cannot address the issue central to this project, namely how is it that phenotypically white immigrants position themselves socially in a similarly racially diverse campus. We will additionally explore whether the nature of the immigrant transitions impact in any discernable way how the types of associations they prefer and create.

In this project a variety of distinct means were used to get at the social mixing patterns of the Eastern European immigrant students. As one measure, students were asked to self characterize their friendship group in the following way: participants were asked to judge two hypothetical scenarios of student interaction on campus reflecting different degrees of social mixing across ethnic and racial lines and reflect on which one better described their own socialization experiences and how so. The first speaker in the fictitious scenario described having a primarily homogeneous friendship group (in-groupers) and the second speaker depicted

an ethnically diverse friendship group (out-groupers). Over two thirds (70.6%) of the Russian and Ukrainian students found parallels with the second speaker, namely that their ties were predominantly not with co-ethnics. Common among their explanations was an assessment that shared current interests were more significant in connecting with other students on campus rather than common ethnic heritage. This rationale is consistent with the strong emphasis on non-ethnic dimensions of their personal identities we saw in Chapter 6. Somewhat more Russian immigrant students shared this viewpoint compared to Ukrainian immigrant students. We do not find much evidence that the nature of early migratory transitions had much of an impact on this dimension of social life. Both the traumatic as well as the easy transitioners predominantly mixed outside their ethnic group often going out of their way to stress the irrelevance of common group membership.

I t d o e s n o t a t t h e c o l o r o f y o u r s k i n i s b r o w n w h a t s t a n d s f o r y o u r e y e s a r e o r w h a t h a v e y o u a h w e a r e a l l p e o p l e a n d o n t h e f a c e o f i t o u r e x p e r i e n c e s a r e e s s e n t i a l l y t h e s a m e... (Akim; 9, Age at arrival; Male, Ukraine).

I n g e n e r a l t h e w a y t h a t r e l a t i o n s h i p s i s t h a t w e h a v e m y f r i e n d s i n t h e s a m e m i n d s e t o f t h e w o r l d y o u k n o w l i k e p o l i t i c s o r i d e a s a b o u t c u l t u r e a n d a r t a n d i n t e r e s t s a n d m u s i c a n d t h i n g s l i k e t h a t w h i c h y o u k n o w... [it] d o e s n o t d e p e n d o n a n y s o r t o f e t h n i c b a c k g r o u n d o r h e r i t a g e o r s o m e t h i n g l i k e t h a t... (Lena; 12, Age at arrival; Female, Ru

A few of the participants did qualify their response by explaining that while during the migration transition in their first schools they needed to connect with co-ethnics they now prefer a diverse group of friends or that they still need the support of co-ethnics who have common interests/same mentality.

In order to shift the focus away from their generalized descriptions of friendships (which might be their ideologies of social mixing), I also asked participants about their actual

friendships. Specifically, participants were asked to identify the three friends who they spent most of their time with on the University campus and to provide information about the ethnicity, race and immigrant status of those three friends. This gives a more grounded account of their close friendships. Four students were unable to name three friends, but instead had one or two close friends on the campus. Summarizing the information on all friends included, we are left with a collective profile of 98 campus friends mentioned. Of this pool, we find that slightly more than half of those included as close friends (54) were also immigrants. However, very few (15) of those immigrant friends were Ukrainian or Russian co-ethnics. Of the remaining 39 immigrant friends, 11 were white Eastern European students, 10 students came from Eastern Europe or Eurasia, and 18 friends were immigrants from other regions of the world with diverse ethno-racial backgrounds.

Of those friends who were not of immigrant backgrounds (44), they were predominantly white, with a small number of African American, Asian, Indian and Latino, and mixed ethnicity and race friends among them. Although as a group they shunned race and ethnicity in principle as a basis for friendship, in practice white students were predominately among the American-born friends on campus and also represented more than half of their immigrant friendship group. Thus, within their collective friendship groups we find relatively few co-ethnics, a finding distinct from Grasmuck and Kim, and few non-white American-born friends. Although a variety of factors are at play here, it must also be noted that the small representation of co-ethnic friends could be associated with the relatively small size of the group of Eastern Europeans on campus. That is, the pool of eligible co-ethnics is relatively small. However, it is worth pointing out that this is also the situation of Hispanics on campus but in their case, Grasmuck and Kim found that

about half of them turned predominantly to African Americans on campus when confronted with a paucity of co-ethnics. Differently, we find among the Eastern European students that they either opt to socialize predominantly with other immigrants or with white native students but relatively infrequently with native minorities. However, beyond the issue of small size, there were also strong themes of rejecting ties to co-ethnics among the European immigrant students. Additionally, the Russian and Ukrainian participants often rejected ties with second generation children of immigrants because of such things language and/or their habits of corrupting their first language, having different values from their own, and not having the same strong motivation to achieve educational goals. In terms of Ukrainian and Russian differences, we find that the Ukrainian students tended to have slightly more co-ethnic friends than did the Russians who had somewhat more friends from various other regions of the world, and had comparatively more American-born friends but these differences were slight. Overall, the Russian and Ukrainian participants most often formed friendships with other students who also were first-generation immigrants of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds, and with American-born white students who did not share their ethnic heritage. Further explication of these patterns will be narratives.

We turn now to the issue of how the childhood immigrant transitions might linger into young adulthood and possibly be expressed in differences in social mixing styles. The comparisons of the mixing patterns reported between the participants and co-ethnic students on the university elucidated a striking pattern of relatively little overall co-ethnic friendships, and a dominant pattern of interacting approximately with the same numbers of other immigrant

students (migrant groupers) and native-born American white students (white groupers).

Consequently, the participants' narratives deal with co-ethnicity, and at the same time their mixing patterns reflect a broader notion of fragmented pluralism since they extend group status to immigrants in general. When we considered the social interaction patterns by nature of migration transition the comparisons indicated that there were relatively minor differences between the constructed cases of easy, difficult and traumatic transitions. That is, our comparisons, when taking into account the nature of their childhood integrations, cannot explain the variations found in the narratives of the participants about their friendship formations on the university campus related to co-ethnicity, immigrant status and white American nativity (Table 1). Typically the students from the three categories of migration difficulty are distributed across the socializing styles in similar ways as Table 1 indicates.

Table 1.

*Ethnicity and Immigrant Status of Friendship Networks of Russian and Ukrainian Students by Nature of Migration Transition*

	Mostly Co-ethnics	Mostly Other Immigrants	Mostly White Americans	Mixed	Totals
Easy	1	2	3	0	6
Difficult	2	4	5	1	12
Traumatic	1	7	6	2	16
Totals	4	13	14	3	34

<sup>a</sup> N=34

The most compelling findings in this investigation on social mixing practices among the Eastern European participants is associated with the low level of co-ethnic mingling, and the prevalence of the two prominent groups of mostly “immixers.” While the Russian and Ukrainian students for many of them the identification with other foreign-born students and less commonality with co-ethnics adds to the complexity of their integration on the multicultural campus. It is possible that the first-generation immigrant students through their social interaction mutually reinforce salient shared values and strengthen by solidify an

It happened that most of my friends at Victory State as from my high school; they are non-Russian speakers. They are international students, but they are not specifically from Russia or Eastern Europe...I almost see a parallel between immigrants in general and Russian speakers... Just friends immigrated here as well even though there are different reasons for coming over but we all know what we are going through...(Adrik; 6, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

I now have an even broader sense of international students and I enjoy that because business school is really diverse. I have much more friends and ah some of them do speak Russian even though they Ukraine or Russia so I also enjoy that...because of the same more in common with them...(Larisa; 7, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

We discussed previously that there were very few non-white American students in the participants' friend networks. In contrast, the immigrant friends were considerably more ethnically diverse. Given the fact that the way we looked at their social mixing patterns it is stressing the “mostly” part of friendship groups, we decided to examine the entire pool of close friends to see how the immigrants and the small number of mixed pools of friends racially divided. For this part of the analysis I racially coded their immigrant friends, coding co-ethnics as white and all non-European immigrant friends as non-white. I found that of

the 54 total close immigrant friends mentioned by all the participants, 59.3 percent were white and 40.7 percent were non-white.<sup>1</sup> This comparison indicates that while there is greater representation of white immigrant students among the participants close proportion are also non-white. When taking race into account the boundaries are brighter between the participants and non-white American students and more blurred between the participants and non-white immigrants according to these comparisons. The commonality in experience that immigrants share seems to bridge the differences of race, nationality, and ethnicity. During the interviews at different times they drew parallels between themselves and other immigrants related to perspectives on the importance of education, work ethic, drive to succeed, and respect for family. Regular interaction with other immigrants could also mutually reinforce their standpoints and self-identification ~~onally, thei m m i g r a n t .~~ ”

marginalization to varying degrees of immigrants by the mainstream society, as is evidenced in current research on residential patterns and native out-migration (Crowder, Hall and Tolnay, 2011), could reinforce cohesiveness among immigrant students on the campus. Other social and internal forces may influence the dominant immigrant socializing patterns among the Eastern European immigrant students. For example, when we consider the salient non ethnic self-identifications for this group of students it is possible that a shared sense of cosmopolitanism may connect them to others who share this orientation. When considering this concept further in conjunction with marginalization of immigrants, this socializing pattern could potentially reflect a type of reaction to societal attitudes in general. The reason for the brighter boundaries between

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<sup>1</sup> For purposes of this analysis I was trying to determine if the non-white immigrant friends were mostly other Europeans or included those that had come to be racialized by dominant culture as non-white. This would include Latinos who are racially mixed. I did not have direct information to break up these friends into white and non-white.

the participants and non-white American students, or low level of mixing with American minority students, is not clear. It could reflect solidarity within some or all of the ethno-racial groups on campus and resistance to out-group socializing also. Calina's perception and her thought processes in approaching other ethno-racial groups that appear cohesive to her.

I think that it's the way you look at it whether you do it for the sake of it to see if you can make it or if you want to actually become friends with them because of your own interest. You become friends with someone if you just need to do it. They don't actually learn how to make a meaningful friendship then it takes more time in order to be around people for example like black people. Victory State is really diverse and it has just about every single ethnicity and race you can imagine. And I mean I have a couple of black friends too, but the thing is I feel that they are more close knit with like people of their own race or like in their own like ah little groups... to you know the clusters and so on because what are they like I'm like I'm going to think? Like what is this white girl trying to do like to be all friends with us? Is it because she's trying to show what is the purpose? Like why is she doing this?... But if it was a scenario where you know if it were something in class then we would associate. But ah like sometimes if it were like three people then I would be more comfortable and I wouldn't feel really awkward, like hey throw me a greeting you doing? Like they would feel like I'm feeling uncomfortable as well. Like I think it would be uncomfortable for the group as well as for me to do that... (Calina; 12,

There were also patterns of exclusive socializing with either just immigrant students or just American students on campus. -but, but a social she leaves the possibility open to forming friends with immigrants based on shared interests. In contrast, Katarina exclusively socializes with immigrant friends from Ukraine because of mutual support.

Well you know I haven't tried to seek out with them you know if there would be a possibility of Russian friends here... (Ilina; 9, Age at arrival

I have a lot of Ukrainian friends here. Ah and mostly like 90 per cent of the time that I spend outside of school I spend with coming in the fall...(Katarina; 7, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

Additional narratives that illustrate this socializing pattern will be included in the following section since they also pertain to relationships with co-ethnics specifically.

Overall, we see that the friendships of the Eastern European students are mostly divided into two groups, other immigrants (not co-ethnics) and white Americans. If we combine the co-ethnics with the other immigrants we see that almost all of them are associating primarily with immigrants, either co-ethnics or others. In this regard we groupers” if we think of Russian or Ukrainian friends or you as one. However, if we expand that notion of in-grouping to one that extends the boundary to immigrants in general, those with somewhat more marginal status in mainstream America then we see a similar tendency for this group to concentrate its socializing with those who share the immigrant experience. This relates both to the small size of the available pool of co-ethnics and to other tensions internal to the heterogeneous pool of Eastern European students. Consequently, when we considered the prevalent socializing practices that were dominant in their narratives with this extended conceptual group by finding that they mostly interact with co-ethnics and other immigrants as well as those who interact at least sometimes with immigrants, then immigrant socializing is the most salient (58.8%) for mixing among our sample. At the same time there is a high prevalence of social interaction with American mainstream students since over forty percent reported most often socializing with them ( “out groupers” ). Co-ethnics found where well be considered in the

separately in the next section since it is worthy of more attention especially since it is a distinct pattern not found among other ethno-racial groups on campus.

### *Relationships with Co-ethnics*

In comparison to the findings of Grasmuck and Kim's (2009) social interaction pattern by non-white ethno-racial students was to interact mostly within their own group, the themes found in this study of white immigrants were different. Here we explore some reasons for this pattern of relatively low levels of co-ethnic friendships through selected participants' narratives. A few of the students with co-ethnics because they were at different stages of assimilation within same ethnic college students.

I took a Russian class and I ended up withdrawing from it because most of the students in there were like Russian and they were like they knew some of the language because their parents were Russian and they and I didn't like sitting in the class learning in that class... (Kalia; 7, Age at arrival; Female, Russia)

A lot of the Russian communities in high school and at Victory State are very closed but I feel like they're very very very too Russian like they speak Russian like between each other and they play Russian music and watch Russian TV and read Russian literature. So maybe I've become too Americanized to have a lot of co-ethnic Russian people who just hang out with Russians feel like I have more in common with people from other backgrounds... (Alexis; 10, Age at arrival; Female, Belarus).

Petrov's narrative about co-ethnics who have not assimilated and move "from village to village," are cohesive differences that may be deterrents in friendship formation.

Just because of the cultural commonality is similar interests but to tell you the truth people that I meet!... Because they are very

of Russian origin but I'm like I'm sorry. you have no contribution in... you're mother they dance you know and it's a good time but they stay in Russia. They move in real close communities that speak Russian almost entirely. A lot do not even become really integrate... they move from village to different people circles of friends who were a very academic close they were white collar... they were pretty mu arrogance... (Petrov; 5, Age at arrival; Male)

Variables other than the above mentioned different assimilative stages, group cohesiveness, and class may also influence their social interaction patterns on campus with co-ethnics. For instance, Grigor, a comparatively more recent immigrant, included in his narrative that he is moving away from the Russian population since he finds them not accepting of his sexual orientation.

And now you have to figure in the fact that was in college... Some being gay is pulling community... that is not a life style that is the Russian culture is very traditional... you want to say about conservatives... is app don't have no problems saying that I am gay I'm a Russian people. So Americans are more accepting in terms of that... I don't actually have Russian friends and my language has become English you know in my house and my mother is the only Russian exposure that is left and my grandmother of course... (Grigor; arrival; Male, Russia).

The objection that co-ethnics alter the Russian and English languages was another pattern that emerged in the participants narratives who have emigrated from their countries of origin.

I have to say I get angry when they do this but ah they use English words in Russian and the way they use it is improper and I really do get angry at the way the use it and they do some things which maybe reconfigured it over the years they yet they use it... (Larisa; 7, Age at arrival)

The degree of Ukrainian nationalism and not American” culture because of differences in values potential deterrent for forming friendships with people of similar backgrounds.

I don't look for Ukrainian people. I try who identifies himself as Ukrainian are very distinction between Russians and Ukrainian nationalism and they want to promote the U my parents always wanted me to be proud of my heritage but they to have any nationalistic tendencies towards Russia, Ukraine, America or anywhere else and to love the country, respect the people and respect my heritage... But some would say but a rtyh! e.. When I had a chance to experience the [Russian] culture I stepped away from it because... Russian Americans are heathens. T and I know that I don't fit in... And the friend and I fit in better... (Biata; 7, Age at arrival; Fer

Time of arrival could be a variable for the nature of interaction between co-ethnics, but it is not always the case. For instance, Katya expressed that she cannot befriend co-ethnics who had emigrated when she did because they fit the stereotypes brands like the Armani Exchange and the DKNY and they all go to the Russian restaurants and drink and they smoke” and that they may be indicative of the existence of different subcultures within the Russian immigrant population that are cohesive as well as variations in values.

The Eastern European immigrant students were asked about the nature of the relationship between the Russian and the Ukrainian students on the university campus because of their shared history, and increasing nationalism in the former Soviet republics during the post-Communist era. Also, it is recognized that immigrants who come from the same nation may have competing interests that stem from the internal economic and political dynamics within their societies and/or may be in competition with each other within the U.S. context. When the

participants were asked to assess the relationship between the Russian and Ukrainian students on the urban campus, 15 of the 34 participants assessed that it is “good” or “mostly good”. Furthermore, more of those who had the greatest challenges during the migration transition gave positive assessments of the group interaction. The dominant provided to explain the positive relationship included the standpoint of similarity between the two groups that facilitates ease of intermingling between Russian and Ukrainian students, ascription as all Eastern Europeans as “Russian immigrants within the U.S. society. Despite the expressions of solidarity among most of the Eastern European students, a third often mentioned a “tension” exists, and they referred to the divisions, and geographical differences in the country of origin as influences in the relationships between Russian and Ukrainian groups. National pride among the recent Ukrainian émigrés and/or those who originate from western Ukraine is the most often cited reason for potential tensions between Russian and Ukrainians and within the Ukrainian group.

There are different kinds of Ukrainian s... it also depends on your location. If you're in the west of Ukraine they're speaking Russian to me you know and the history that is closer towards Russia ah you know ah they associate themselves with Russians and they speak Russian...and so I'm kind of forced into learning the Ukrainian culture and learning their language [boyfriend and friends are Ukrainian]...until I came here I thought that Ukrainian was just a messed up Russian language...(Calina; 7, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

The usage of humor by Russian students at the expense of Ukrainian students was pointed out by a few participants in their narratives, and it is indicative of an undercurrent of tension that may be subtle or more direct—especially when the Russian students joke about

“controlling” the Ukrainian students. An overt hostility toward Ukrainian students was reflected in their narratives.

I have like two Russian friends but we don't we're really not friends. We're just kinda like „Hi! How are there's always the issue that comes [up] that used to control you they have so many jokes that are like to go like a Russian façade, and Russians have so many opinions to give and when we're together and something slips it's like keep to themselves most of the time...(Katarina 7, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

Although Ukrainians who are Russian speakers are not as sensitive to being called Russian, Grigor reported that his Russian and Ukrainian roommates set ground rules for safe discussion topics in order to avoid quarrels. Divisions are not only potentially greater between recent immigrants based on nationality, but according to Andreea the students who have emigrated from Moscow distinguish themselves from other Russians by identifying with their city of origin.

Even though the participants most often expressed that they do not get involved with the political developments within the former Soviet republics, their responses at times reflected existing undercurrents of the past and present relationships. Overall, within the selected participants' narratives we discerned that such Ukrainians, expressions of Ukrainian nationalism, degree of assimilation, and intolerance toward individual sexual orientation create tensions among co-ethnics. These emergent patterns in the students' narratives may partly explain the findings on the campus found in this investigation. Although there are limitations for analysis since the number of cases being considered are small, these comparisons may have implications that could direct future investigations of socialization practices in multi-cultural contexts for this population.

### **Racial Minorities: Views about Privilege and Disadvantage on Campus**

Given the findings associated with relatively weak ties with racial minorities overall, and the relatively under examined issue of how white immigrants position themselves in the U.S. color line, a number of questions were asked about racial meanings, how their meanings of race intersect with dominant ones. We also wanted to know if their immigrant experiences as well as their whiteness would impact the way they viewed racial disadvantages in broader society and on campus. Finally, we explored the question of whether the difficulty of their own migratory experience would make a difference in how they assessed the disadvantages of racial minorities.

The majority of the Eastern European participants were essentially socialized in racially white homogenous neighborhoods in their first country, and it was of interest to learn how they situated themselves within a multicultural society and what their general perspectives were on diversity. A consistent pattern emerged from their narratives of appreciation for people of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds.

In order to be comfortable in my environment I cannot deny people of other cultures to surround me. I can't deny that I have been called to be part of this place and that is what America is for me...(Stefan; 14, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

I always thought that ah race is kind of overrated and overall from a very early age I think I was taught to be tolerant and from all walks of life you know...my best friend is gay and black so...I know I don't like labels... (Akim; 9, Age at arrival)

Another strong current that ran through their accounts was the embrace of the ideology of meritocracy. It is not clear how their views were shaped since their experiences as white immigrants coming from racially homogeneous societies is different in general from the American-born population, but they also have been socialized in the U.S. during a portion of

their childhood and/or early adolescence. Individual processes within their narratives provide certain insights.

I really don't like the fact that some people Mexicans, Jews, maybe some Christians, and some with disabilities judge them as that's who you like you really want to break out of that... It's a stereotype and I really did not like that. People who are racist. I really don't understand anything. I only judge or you are... what religion you don't care... (Arman; 10, Age at arrival; Male, Uzbekistan).

Others stressed that capitalism is the vehicle for mobility if one works hard, but it was acknowledged that there are certain inherent flaws in this economic system.

### **Race: Significance in U.S. Compared to Country of Origin**

The significance of race was explored during the interviews, and most of the Russian and Ukrainian students expressed that race is more important in the U.S. since it is a society composed of diverse ethnic and racial groups from all over the world. A third more of the Ukrainian students adhered to this viewpoint.

There are a lot more people of different backgrounds. They have a lot more experience with race whereas in Russia there are just Russians... there is what would call white Russians and black Russians. Ah so traditionally white Russians are what Belarusians all earlier used to have... its like dirty blond hair blue eyes and that's what the Russian Russians was... Belarus started out as and then they were infiltrated by Mongolians and so they mixed and so we have the black Russians the black hair, the black eyes and the darker skin... (Dimitra; 6, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

There weren't in Russia. I know in Russia there is I guess you can compare as African American people here instead there they are people from the Middle East... yeah Middle Eastern people against... (Sergei; 9, Age at arrival; Male,

In addition to the existing ethnic and racial diversity in the U.S. other reasons for race being more important here included the racial history of prejudice and discrimination, a race

consciousness, more attention to race due to the black/white experience, race categories are on forms, and racism exists. One student stressed that it is not a matter of race being more or less important but rather race and some of “do not compare” “be Russia.

Well you know what race is such an interesting topic to discuss because you know in Russia it is not really so much the concept difference. You know like...there is something what is wrong with you America is a bit more wish you like this weird double edged sword...it is all somebody...People are very happy to be in the get you know a certain kind of; 5, Age (at arrival; Male, Russia).

A few other students insisted that race or the concept of differences by race did not exist in their language nor were there race categories on formal documents within their countries of origin. Consequently, there were strong voices opposed to dividing people by race.

We didn't have race. I don't think that is superficial thing...Well like here in this country a part of prejudice and I know it is such a wide topic just like want to be a part of it. I don't want to know you're black or you're white...They're One is a black cat and one is like a red orange cat. They are cats. It is a cat. We are people!...I don't want to identify in my nature to do that but it is a part of America of this country. I mean we did not have that in Ukraine).. (Dima; 8, Age at

However, eight Eastern European students, evenly divided between Russians and Ukrainians, talked about race being more important in their first country because of the predominant white racial homogeneity, open racism, and the lack of redress for overt acts of racism.

I think the people the Russian people in Moscow when I was there they are racists! They are definitely still racist

and Russia doesn't at all like everyone that's not white is discriminated against still...(Kalia; 7, Age at arrival; Female, Russia)

These contradictory accounts may reflect the distinctive experiences these child migrants had in different communities within their countries of origin.

When the participants were asked what *whiteness* meant to them more than half of their narratives included perspectives such as that societal structures exist to the advantage of the white race at the expense of people from other ethnic and racial groups, civil rights history in the U.S., apartheid, or socioeconomic class. A few participants extended this idea to include middle class suburban whites and capitalists, and eleven students stated that *whiteness* signified white people or people with light skin, Europeans, American whites, and WASPs.

The participants who did discuss the concept “white privilege” typically gave a standpoint on U.S. society today. Most of these participants had taken race courses on the university campus which they assessed as valuable in understanding the issues concerning race.

I have taken a couple of ah African American courses...and Sociology and what have you ah I ve come—the white man in fact is due l u s i o n t h to the slavery and the history. When you came here at first you identified as Irish American, German American, Russian American, Spanish American whatever but because of the slavery issue where the whites were owners, so we all got grouped into one t h i n g ... ( A k i m ; 9 , A g e a t a r r i v a l ; M a l

Their standpoints about whether or not white people are privileged and/or have more power

within U.S. society are differentiated by the nature of their childhood migration transitions. The

Russian and Ukrai n i a n i m m i g r a n t s t u d e n t s w i t h t h e t w o e

“ d i f f i c u l t ” t r a n s i t i o n e r s , w e r e n o t f a r a p a r t

standpoint that white people are privileged or dominant. Here is one typical comment of those two groups.

I think about the history of race relations and I think that whites will remain privileged. That's what I think...I don't know if today it's as strong...(Valerik; 5, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

A very distinct viewpoint was articulated by those with the most difficult of migratory

t r a n s i t i o n s ; t w o t h i r d s o f t h e “ t r a u m a t i c ” t r  
privileged and/or do not have the most power today.

I had a class in the first semester about Race and Film and I wrote a class paper on  
t h a t ... I r e m e m b e r t h e w o r d l i k e t h a t w o r d t h  
the advancement of capitalism that was like a big theme...and how industry  
s t a r t e d w h e n w h i t e n e s s l e d t o p r o g r e s s w e r s o b u t  
9, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

Sergei expressed that rather than equating the advancement of capitalism with white power, he

c o n t e n d s t h a t i t i s n o t c o n n e c t e d , t h a t b e i n g  
“ e v e r y b o d y e r t i g h t m u n o w e i q u a p l r . I s e e t h a t e s p e c  
p o s s i b l e t h a t S e r g e i a n d o t h e r p a r t i c i p a n t s

influenced by the post-Communist childhood environment. Additionally, the students felt

strongly that their status as white people did not privilege them because they experienced the

hardships associated with immigration and assimilation in America, and some maintained that

they were less privileged because of their race since they are a minority in their community.

W e l l I m e a n t h a t s n o t a n y t h i n g y o u h e a r h  
d i v e r s i t y ... t h e i d e a t h a t y o u k n o w w h i t e p e o  
h a v e a c q u i r e d ... I d o n t k n o w . I m e a n i f y o u  
m i n o r i t y . S o I d o n t t h i n k I m p r i v i l e g e d  
w o u l d b e s c a r e d t o w a l k d o w n m y s t r e e t l a t  
but I am white you know. In that case they would be privileged because they  
[African Americans] are the majority in that particular situation...(Ilina; 9, Age of  
arrival; Female, Russia).

Even though I'm white and I was an immigrant I have a lot of privileges. They gave a lot of privileges like for African American people because they are a minority but I think everybody should have the same privileges and like for school to get in they have to have a percentage of those people and a percentage of this you know like I think a lot of people have and not what race you are...(Genka; 12, Age at arrival; Female, Ukraine).

That's a mute point you know white dominant which is a highly racially diverse city that is not an issue. We have a Black President for God's sakes . . . (Genka; 12, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

Child migrants from Eastern Europe who have painful recollections from those early years in America do not as a group see themselves or even other whites as dominant or privileged based on a perceived or ascribed white racial identity. This common standpoint is reinforced by a high representation of prominent and successful non-white people on their university campus, city and on the national stage which they contrast with their own experiences or observations of white immigrants who had experienced powerlessness and disadvantage during the migration transition. Although the participants essentially are phenotypically white during the period of acculturation they were not considered to be on the same level as white mainstream Americans in the stratification system. Instead, they as immigrant children were placed most often below all of the ethnic and racial groups in the peer social hierarchy, and these recollections may still evoke emotions that influence their standpoint. Their references often pointed to the most visible dimensions of racial progress and not to the persisting disadvantages evident in residential segregation, educational segregation or high levels of persistent poverty among racial minorities.

Another major and related theme within their narratives reflected their appreciation for opportunities in America and at the university, and that on the university campus there is a level playing field for all students.

I love Victory State I have to say first the setting of the campus. There are so many people and they are all so nice...you come here and you have a choice. It really personifies what America is. Anything that you want to do you can ... (Arman; 10, Age at arrival; Male, Uzbekistan).

The ideology of a “colorblind” society has Americans who generally accept its central tenet that racial equality has been achieved.

Opponents of this standpoint contend that this ideology has facilitated the maintenance of white hegemony with its implicit structural racial inequality (Doane and Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Omi and

Winant, 1994). Predominantly the Russian and standpoint-blindness they as a group assess regardless of race on the urban university campus, and some extended it to the society at large.

Nonetheless distinctions within the group on this standpoint could be discerned by the nature of

their migration transitions. Whereas over the urban poor students are disadvantaged on the university campus by nearly the same proportion

the “traumatic” and —not any university students were regarded differently disadvantaged on campus.

Disadvantaged? I know that underprivileged we are all used to the culture of college—University's culture. We are all here and we...are all on kinda the same level playing field. The kids that are here are smart and in that sense we are all privileged. How you get here that's maybe where the privilege in... (Biata; 7, Age at arrival; Female, Ukra

I think University allows all of the groups I would say many diverse groups. Just by the amount of groups... I would assume that disadvantaged... (Ivan; 11, Age at arrival; Male)

I think that everyone has at arrival; Female, no chance... (Belarus).

Ah I think here everyone is pretty much on University... (Sergei; 9, Age at arrival; Male)

Students who had recounted economic struggle as immigrants offered their observations of

seeing other students being taken care of by

verbalized her fear of failing any classes since she is fully responsible for college tuition, and

Irina questions the policy of providing scholarships for single parents on the campus when the

requirement for two-parent families is to be “very poor”

money.”

Nonetheless, there was a pronounced difference in the viewpoint by most of the participants whose incorporation stories reflected a relatively unencumbered entrance into the U.S. schools and neighborhoods. They talked more often about their observations of difference based on socio-economic status and during the interview they explored possible reasons why disadvantage confronts some of the students on their campus. To illustrate, an observation was made about the disparity that exists between those who come to the campus from poor urban areas and those who live in the suburbs.

Here I can I see kids who obviously are disadvantaged. You can just tell that they are poor. For example, I went to the computer lab...and there was this one young man sitting next to me an African American because I told him a shoes were really work and his socks had holes in them... (Vadim; 9, Age at

Two of the participants noted that the disabled students had visible disadvantages managing their lives on the campus, and Yuri pointed out that in addition to the daily challenges of meeting their own basic needs, they are often excluded from vital social interaction on the campus.

Whereas “whiteness” held various meanings in context, two thirds of the Eastern European students explained that it did not signify anything in Russia or Ukraine because they are racially homogeneous white societies. Five of the Russian students said that there was an awareness of race but it was different compared to the U.S. since it is rare not to be white in Russia. Adrik g in Russia that is associated with age and religion rather than on race.

I think there might be a distinction in Russia just because ah of age. Everything else would probably be the same in Russia except in Russia a lot of people in Russia who are prosperous are of the young would be slightly different...I think that it bear out that it would be the Christian background in wouldn't be as uncommon ah if someone was here in the U.S. whereas in Russia it would be less common for someone to be Jewish...(Adrik; 6, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

Having been socialized for different periods of time during their childhood in the former Soviet Republics, the participants offered often unique perspectives on U.S. racial history. The subject of the enslavement of Black people, withholding of civil rights, and the long-lasting economic and social effects of this painful chapter in American history is familiar to them especially since in this particular university context there is a requirement to take a diversity course for graduation. There is a current debate as to the degree of accountability the white dominant group ought to take to acknowledge and rectify past mistakes. During the interview the participants were asked to consider the history of slavery, race and discrimination in the U.S.

and they were asked to give their viewpoint on “white collective guilt.” This question prompted claims for past injustices that continue to affect their descendents. How the white ethnic immigrant students position themselves on these issues may have important implications for integration, identification with other American white people as well as for their political orientation toward reparations. For the most part their narratives reflect their views about their own position as a white Russian or Ukrainian immigrant in the U.S. context and/or the idea of any group being responsible for historical events or collectively assuming guilt based on group membership. Nearly all of the participants, regardless of the nature of their migration transitional experiences, adhered to the standpoint that they reject collective guilt or responsibility based on belonging to any racial group. The most prominent theme in their rationale on this dimension was disassociation with injustices of the past since they are immigrants without roots in the U.S. Therefore since neither they nor their ancestors were responsible for what happened in America

I think I understand it intellectually. I on that guilt personally because like it's not like my great grandfather had like slaves and killed them. Right? But I understand like the dichotomy of these like two peoples and their conflict and in that sense I can like empathize but I don't personally take that on...(Kalia; 7, Age at arrival; Female, Russia).

Whatever was in the past should be left in the past. You should learn about it but you should not...bring it over into a different Female, Kazakhstan).

I don't think there is white accountability up through slavery has you know unfairly been directed against people that have not been associated with it...The people that were responsible for slavery...will not receive the anger that resulted because of that ah most of that has come out in cities in the north east...and ah also the make up of the United States ah there are

whites Caucasians coming in from other places (Ukraine).

I don't think people who had absolutely no even though you know some grandfather might and father have been one a slave owner it doesn't responsible. So even in the same family not generations ago people believe they would have very different opinions about that subject...(Luka; 12, Age at arrival; Male, Russia).

Other students, like Stefan, stressed that what they currently do as individuals is all that matters to them, and that they do not invest their energies into historical events that they could not impact.

The participants related some of the recurrent themes found elsewhere regarding equality of opportunity or included the position that in certain situations white people have less power.

I don't you know way for their situation and judging from in any seeing all different races on campus and they seem fine to me you know if anything white people sometimes feel that they make their opinions taken open a place with the eyes I don't see a lot of white people going around Black person hears someone call them you know the N word or something like that. So I don't know if that is really an friends I know that...(Irina; 9, Age at arrival)

Yuri's narrative reflected the standpoint African Americans can advocate for themselves on the basis of their African American heritage if they experience injustice, but a white person cannot say "Oh I'm white."

African Americans I would say...they have good economic status. They have good social life. They are respected everywhere as whites. And sometimes I would say they are even in a much much higher priority and regarded and respected than new immigrants who come from countries of Europe I would say not knowing the language somebody and somebody would have revenge against me I wouldn't say, "White! just because I have received that."

way but ah an African American person I would say even has a certain advantage of saying I m a n A f r i c a n A m e r i c a n a n d t h a t d i s a d v a n t a g e . . . ( Yuri ; 10 , A g e a t a r r i v a l ; M a l e , U k r a i n e ) .

This viewpoint of African Americans having advantages over new immigrants was held by a few other participants, and they reported that they and/or their family members have personally experienced w h i t e o n w h i t e o p p r e s s i o n . T o i l l u s t r a t e , a m o t h e r w a s m a n d a t e d t o p i c k c o t t o n i n o r d e r t o r e m a i n a t t h e U n i v e r s i t y a n d s t u d y , a n d t h i s e x p e r i e n c e i n f l u e n c e d h i s p h i l o s o p h y o f g i v i n g a l l a f a i r o p p o r t u n i t y b u t n o t a c c e p t i n g c o l l e c t i v e g u i l t a s a w h i t e p e r s o n f o r i n j u s t i c e s a g a i n s t w h i t e ” o p p r e s s i o n t o “ w h i t e o n b l a c k ” o p p r e s s i o n . U k r a i n i a n s b y t h e C o m m u n i s t s .

My history in my country we had oppression too like we were considered serfs like under the Communist rule and we had genocide too. And so like I understand. It happens everywhere. Just because here it was white against black in my country it was white against black and that's why you don't want to admit that your country that you learn. That's how you grow. . . ( K a t e , U k r a i n e ) .

During the interviews there were a few Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students that passionately stated that it is a mistake to hold any racial, national or religious group responsible for historic crimes.

We're so caught up with the notion of race that we don't know. You owe me this! You owe me that because of this and that! I owe nothing to anybody! I came here when I was nine years old. My grandparents went through World War II you know... and they don't owe you anything and neither do my grandparents because we group each other in such a way that doesn't mean it's not. If you want to identify me by my skin. And neither are you! So, stop. Some of the past defines us. If I don't have a certain skin color and we don't know what is going

everything that is dear you know but if it  
 You learn from it so that it so that it never happens again. Like you learn from  
 the holocaust. You know I could say that Germans owe me reparations, but no  
 they don't! They ~~don't~~ <sup>don't</sup> learn from that experience from that arn from it!  
 happening. don't. (Akim; 9, Age at arrival; Male, Ukraine).

I mean I would say no just because should all Muslims be responsible for  
 September 11th which is actually today they are not all responsible! Not even  
 probably 97% of them are not responsible!...So I mean do I think all white people  
 should really feel guilty and responsible?  
 Germans. Should all Germans blame themselves  
 been to Germany...Ah I've been to Holland. I  
 camps. Do I think all Germans are respons  
 at arrival; Female, Russia).

Given their overall strong standpoint on this issue, it was not surprising that only a few  
 Eastern European immigrant students agreed that restitution for past discrimination against  
 African Americans and the Japanese ought to be addressed. A few participants reasoned that  
 restitution should be given if it would be possible to identify those who were actually affected by  
 prejudice and discrimination in the 1950s and 1960s but not on the basis of slavery since the  
 slaves are not alive today. Within the minority voices is the standpoint that while they do not  
 assume any guilt or responsibility as white persons they recognize the reasons for disadvantage  
 and want to make a positive difference as American citizens or as members of the middle class.

So I really don't like the fact that they  
 great grandparents or whatever. I would say that in a way since I'm here now and  
 I'm an American citizen that I actually feel  
 the point where I would feel guilty but to the point where I would want to shift  
 something change something ah change somet  
 at arrival; Female, Uzbekistan).

I recognize the privilege that I've had be  
 America and not only as a white person but as a white person of like middle  
 class...living in good areas and neighborhoods and have access to a good public  
 school it's part of it. And so I think th  
 goal is to have other people recognize that they are privileged and also to...help

them recognize the system top12, Age at that we r arrival; Female, Russia).

The Ukrainian and Russian participants im as white immigrant people, oppression in their first countries, and their general opposition to minority claims for historical victimization formed their standpoint of disassociation with American history of prejudice and discrimination regardless of the nature of their transition. There were prevalent voices that equated immigrant status and the associated struggles with historical slavery, discrimination, prejudice, and disadvantage, and predominantly these views were expressed by participants who had experienced traumatic migration transitions. These participants could not identify with privilege based on their white race and espoused that there is equality of opportunity, and stressed the ideology of meritocracy. Their narratives in certain key ways reflected the prevalent explanation for upper mobility of past streams of white immigrants through hard work. While the drive to achieve has been noted among immigrants, there are a myriad of circumstantial variables that impact mobility of immigrant groups differentially such as the distinct historical periods in which they arrive, contexts of reception, societal structures, and economic forces (Steinberg, 1981, 1089, 2001). Importantly, there were also participants that recognized the existence of inequality based on race, and who expressed with conviction their support of policies that would rectify social and economic injustice.

Overall, the dominant standpoint by the Eastern European immigrant students is that their college classmates have equal opportunities and are not hindered by socio economic factors. As evidence for their position they point to the fact that students from many different ethnic, racial, and class backgrounds have been accepted at the university to study. Consequently, the interaction with successful immigrant and native-born American students reinforces the

erroneous impression that upward mobility is accessible to all who strive to reach high goals.

The socio economic backgrounds of the students at the university represent a wide spectrum, and many commute to the campus from the urban inner city neighborhoods.

### **Discussion**

The Eastern European immigrant students adaptation, social pattern is a complex phenomenon. As a group they seem to have adapted well in general to the academic and social life on the urban university campus. At the same time a third of the students reported that they were still contending with social, cultural and language issues associated with their emigration during childhood. Since the narratives of two thirds of the participants indicated that they had experienced difficult or traumatic events during their childhood migration transitions in the first U.S. schools and neighborhoods we here explored whether the emotions that were engendered during the period of acculturation could conceivably have a long-lasting effect. Although it is not possible to definitively identify the direction of causality within individuals narratives of life events or the methodology utilized in this exploration facilitated comparisons and correlations in emergent patterns found in their narratives. The typology revealed that there were distinct differences in outcomes on selected dimensions of college social adjustment. Percentage comparisons indicated that predominantly more of the participants who had described traumatic childhood migration transitions within their narratives reported that they contended with social, cultural and linguistic challenges after they entered the urban university campus. This finding indicates that the unique constellation of childhood migration, acculturation and integration experiences and associated emotions may have a lingering effect in young adulthood. While conclusions cannot

be drawn based on this limited investigation, the emotions engendered as a result of the migration experiences during childhood and those expressed when recounting recalled traumatic events seem to continue to have an impact. It is possible, of course, that those with more difficult adjustment patterns on college or general emotional or social issues tend to remember their pasts as more difficult; that is, the negative present provides a negative lens through which to remember a long ago past. Judging which way the causation flows here is difficult. Nonetheless, we do find this correlation between highly negative memories of the migratory transition and narratives of persisting adjustment difficulties which the narratives themselves causally link in the direction of traumatic past impacting difficult present.

There were also prevalent socialization patterns within their accounts. Relatively few Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students socialized with other co-ethnics, and they more often socially interacted with other immigrants of diverse ethno-racial backgrounds and American-born white friends. Whereas Grasmuck and Kim (2010) found both visions of multiculturalism, fragmented-pluralism (‘nichin-groapeirv’ pahr’ahim mixers’), simultaneously enracial groups at the same our sec campus, the social interaction patterns described by the Russian and Ukrainian students reflected a low level of fragmented pluralism since the extending the boundary to include all immigrants and a few mixers we might also consider this broader group-gaouþimmi ghan’ishn when taking in “ignroup” immigrant mixing then we may conclude fragmented pluralism among these students, and a somewhat lower prevalence of interactive pluralism of those who mostly socialized with

We also found other boundaries when taking into account race; racial boundaries were more blurred between the Eastern European students and non-white immigrants but considerably brighter between the Eastern Europeans and native minority American students. This comparison indicated a greater prevalence of minority mixing with immigrant students but nearly non-existent minority mixing with American minority students. However, race is not the only variable to influence boundary formation. It is especially noteworthy that the brightest boundaries existed between the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students and their co-ethnic second-generation counterparts; that is, a first-generation division. The reasons for different patterns of low co-ethnicity and low minority representation in their social interaction are not entirely clear. While one possible explanation for the observed social interaction patterns may be linked to the small representation of certain groups on campus, but it also could be influenced by other factors such as the different acculturation pathways, inter and intra group dynamics on campus and in the larger society, commonality of shared immigrant experience, and the marginalization of immigrants by mainstream Americans in the U.S. context.

Another prominent theme that emerged was the embrace of the ideologies of “meritocracy” and “American Dream” society. Most of the Eastern European immigrant students expressed that on the university campus everyone had an equal opportunity for upward mobility. However, a significant difference in narratives on this topic with those who had recounted greater challenges during their migration transitions most often expressing this viewpoint. Those that made observations of major economic disadvantages among the students on campus typically were Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students who had relatively easier migration transitions. This distinction in emergent

patterns was also discerned on the related topic of privilege and power where two thirds of the “traumatic” transitioners con-privileged in the U.S. that “white” today. Concomitantly, examples were given of how in their experience as white immigrants they had less power. There were also a few student privilege based on their perceived current disadvantage. For the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students whose narratives indicated that they had experienced trauma during their childhood acculturation, the emotional import seems to continue to influence their attitudes regarding issues of privilege, power and race. However, as a group there was a predominant disassociation with American history of prejudice and discrimination regardless of the nature of their integration because of their own immigrant status, struggle as white immigrant people, and a related strong argument against collective accountability based on membership in any racial group for historical injustices. A common equate “white” oppression in their African American historical experience of discrimination and prejudice in

As a group, the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students principally expressed that they do not believe in “otuhnet acboinlcietyt”’s foofr “pwahsitt ei najcues t groups in the U.S. Their objections were essentially based on their standpoint that as immigrants they are not associated with America’s past i accountability for any reason. Commonly, they equated immigrant status with the discrimination minority groups have experienced by citing events in their own lives. At the same time, some of the students expressed that lessons should be learned from the past, and that as American citizens they and others ought to take responsibility to facilitate social justice.

These emergent patterns in conjunction with others found in their narratives as a whole are valuable in increasing our understanding of how white immigrant students situate themselves in a multicultural context. Although they emigrated to the U.S. during childhood their identification with other immigrants of similar and different backgrounds remains strong through early adulthood. At the same time the prevalence of mainstream American friendship formations is indicative of a high degree of social integration. Further complexity is added when assessing their adaptation pathways since many had reported salient components in their self-identifications that were non-ethnic (Chapter 6). Additionally, the reported emotions experienced during integration seemed to exert an influence in young adulthood. The themes that emerged from the participants' narratives together convey the salience of the child migration experience of disrupted childhood developmental stages as a result of migration and the emotions engendered during acculturation in peer contexts of reception may continue to exert an influence on the Eastern European students' adaptation pathway.

## CHAPTER 8

### CONCLUSION

#### Introduction

In this final chapter I will discuss the primary themes that emerged in the interviews with the Eastern European immigrant students about their childhood immigration, acculturation, and integration experiences in relationship to the potential influences of emotions as well as the implications for theory development and future research. The accounts by the Russian and Ukrainian participants add to the existing limited knowledge of childhood immigration generally and to the experiences of child migrants from Eastern Europe specifically. Both populations are understudied groups although they represent a substantial segment of the immigrant population in the U.S. today.

There is a general assumption in much of the immigration scholarship that the cultural influences of the first country on child immigrants are essentially obscured or eliminated by the acculturation process in the U.S. This assumption also leads scholars to collapse child migrants (or what we might call “the 1.25s”) in with s it is also generally understood that primary socialization experiences in childhood are highly influential in the emotional development of individuals during subsequent phases of secondary socialization. Much of the psychological literature recognizes that if the early home context is abruptly changed for children, successful secondary socialization is more difficult and could result in lingering feelings of inadequacy. Thus it is reasonable to assume that the migration transitional experiences, whether positive or negative, may affect their adaptation and general perspectives of child migrants, an assumption behind much of this inquiry. Our exploration

underscores how the child migrants stories d contexts but, rather, part of their stories must include their removal from social spaces where they feel competent and placing them into a society that they do not initially understand and with people who may not feel comfortable with them. Although the importance of early childhood experiences in general have been acknowledged, the emotional aspect of significant disruption in immigrant children s lives have not been fully the contrary, immigrant children s status has experiences marginalized to such an extent that they have largely been invisible in the literature. Even though the scholarly interest in the well-being of immigrant children has increased the dominant assumption has been that the foreign-born children typically mirror their immigrant parents culture and language has essentially This standpoint is commonly present in scholarly literature, and in other forms of publications where foreign-born children are referred to as “children of immigr their own category of “immigrant children.” integration in the U.S. context has fundamentally been obscured through entrenched practices of conflating the foreign-born and American-born children of immigrants into the same research category thereby negating their life experiences. Additionally, most of the immigrant youth scholarship is focused on the influences of culture on mobility of the second generation adolescents.

The extent to which child migrants experience the dislocation and adaptation and the possible lasting consequences in their adaptation pathways, self-identifications, social interaction, and standpoints on societal issues in relationship to the potential impact of emotions

has been a central focus of this inquiry. Through the interviews with 34 Eastern European immigrant university students who migrated to the U.S. during childhood we have learned about their pre-migration life, emigration process, transitions in the neighborhoods and schools, self-identification and adaptation on an urban university campus in their young adulthood. The participants incorporation narratives have childhood disruption in their country of origin and transitioning in a foreign cultural and linguistic context. Most of the participants had difficult or traumatic acculturation and integration phases in their first U.S. schools and neighborhoods, and often they recounted emotionally the memories of these profound events during the interviews. Regardless of whether the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students recounted positive and/or negative transitional experiences they view themselves as first generation immigrants since they have experienced emigration, integration, and participated in the immigrant struggle alongside their parents. Furthermore, most of the participants subjectively conclude that these childhood migration experiences have had enduring effects on the persons that they have become. Of the 34 participants 33 stated that there was at least one salient effect associated with their migration and integration experiences. The primary long-term effects that emerged in narratives include an appreciation for diverse ethnic culture retention, and challenges with social development issues, linguistics, and the American culture. In the following sections we will discuss in summary form the nature of the narratives of childhood recalled migration and acculturation experiences, and the primary themes related to the participants constructed self-identifications and adaptations on the urban university campus.

### **Narratives of Recalled Childhood Migration Experiences**

This investigation has underscored the essential powerlessness of children on multiple levels. Because of obvious necessity adults assume the responsibility for children and are given the power to do so. However, the ages where responsibilities begin to be transferred to the child are culturally defined and the perceived capacities of children vary. Through societal institutions the expectations of children are reinforced, and through education as well as other forms of communication the concept of children and their capacities are constructed and perpetuated. At times assumptions have been made about children even erroneous. For this reason, as discussed previously, researchers are increasingly advocating for children's input during theory development in childhood. This standpoint is applicable for investigations of child migration experiences since it is critical that we know how they experience these events at different ages and/or what the nature of their recollections are about childhood migration events. However, since the process of memory retrieval in general is often contested, as discussed in Chapter Three, there are evident challenges to overcome in assessing the long term impact of early experiences based on these memories. We acknowledge that constructed narratives come from various subject positions and may mesh dimensions of the past, present and imagined future. At the same time, regardless of the process an individual employs in narrative construction of past life events they may continue to exert an influence throughout the life span. The participants in this study ranged in ages five through 14 when they emigrated to the U.S. and comparisons were made of the narratives given by their age of arrival. While those aged 9 through 14 during migration were able to provide more content generally in

their narratives, there were child migrants who were as young as five who provided descriptions of their countries of origin as well as numerous details about the pre-migration process, journey and transitions in U.S. schools and neighborhoods. Even if these were small parts of that entire migratory experience, these are the narrative may stimulate emotions.

When the participants recounted the stages of their immigration experience, the emotional import of these events was apparent during the interview. In chapters three through five we illustrated through the participants recollections of both positive and negative aspects of their experiences, the sense of powerlessness of children in the decision-making process to emigrate, their acute missing of all that was familiar, the impact of transitioning into unfamiliar cultural and linguistic contexts, and for most the contending with isolation and rejection by mainstream and more assimilated co-ethnic peers.

Since emotion has been found to be a powerful force on human action, we wanted to explore the potential impact of the nature of their migration transitional experiences in young adulthood. To facilitate percentage comparisons of these emergent themes and the variations in the degree of possible emotional import associated with acculturation and integration experiences a typology was created in terms of easy, difficult or traumatic remembered transitions. These categories served as a continuum by degree of difficulty found in their narratives about the challenges they faced when they emigrated to the U.S. Those cases placed in the transitional category were those with a moderate experience whereas students placed in the “tr

and painful emotional events in the first U.S. schools and neighborhoods. The middle category of “difficult” transients whose narratives included a range of posed of problematic aspects to the cultural and linguistic changes they encountered in the U.S. context but none had an overall easy or traumatic transition. While there were variations within the constructed categories there were also persistent distinctions between the cases assigned to the three types of experiences. Although we expected that the difficulty of migratory, acculturation and integration experiences might have a lasting impact on how the immigrants self identified, this was not confirmed by the interviews as discussed in Chapter Six. Although the emotional acculturation experienced by the participants appears to have been an influence, there are other influences that emerged in the narratives about their identity claims. In contrast, we did find that the early migration, acculturation and integration experiences and connected emotions were related to differences in their adaptation pathways during their university years (Chapter Seven). Overall we found a range of additional variables beyond the migratory transition that impacted in salient ways the adaptation trajectories and self-identifications, and that these processes are interconnected and emergent.

We will briefly summarize the findings related to the selected dimensions by taking into account comparisons for the entire sample of the participants, and then the emergent patterns from the percentage comparisons utilizing the typology that indicated that trauma associated with childhood acculturation and integration experiences in U.S. schools and neighborhoods may potentially exert an influence into young adulthood. The variations in dominant patterns found on selected dimensions when considering the emotions associated with disruption of this childhood developmental stage through migration, and the ensuing experiences of acculturation

and integration within peer contexts of reception indicate that there may be enduring effects in adulthood. However, there are limitations in our analysis of the findings since the sample size is small.

### **Construction of Self-Identifications**

Identity formation is interrelated with the explored adaptation trajectories. The constructed self-identification modes that emerged from grouped into non ethnic (Cosmopolitan/Global/Role), ethnic (Russian/Ukrainian) and ethnic American (Russian American/Ukrainian American) or multiethnic American. However, these categories only partially capture the complexity of the identification process for this group of Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students. Although a salient hybrid non ethnic identity formation, and the other half reflected ethnic and layered ethnic American or multiethnic American identities, there was considerable complexity within their self-identifications. The non ethnic forms of identity constructs reflected global, cosmopolitan, role, attributes, and mutable dimensions, and the ethnic and ethnic American forms frequently included a fluid dimension and/or were hybrid or layered. An illustration of a fluid ethnic construct was depicted as being other ethnics and American with American friends. Moreover, the multiethnic American forms of identity construction typically included three components where American and Jewish were two layers and their ethnicity of origin a third.

In no cases was a single identification given without a main qualifying statement. Commonly “American” was referenced as “Americanized” or as being an “American citizen

typically with native birth. In part this suggests notions of nationality/ethnicity, and the inculcation of the culture and language in their first country. The perception as foreign-born and possessing an immigrant status exerts an influence on their constructed self-identifications. Another influence on self-identifications that emerged from their narratives was the ascription of ethnic identities by others who routinely labeled all students from the first country. Those not embracing an American identity exclusively may also be influenced by the different status accorded native-born Americans and naturalized Americans regardless of time in the country. After all, while immigrants are able to become American citizens with all rights of that status conferred upon them, but the highest office of the land is reserved for those born in the U.S. a symbolic relic of immigrant stigma.

Interestingly, regardless of the importance of ethnic meanings in Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students, the participants included a non-ethnic element to their identity constructions. Childhoods characterized as being in flux and coping with feelings of not fitting in during the period of acculturation and incorporation often foster reactions manifested in feelings of not being anchored to any clearly defined self-perception. It was common for the interviewees to express their resistance to labels of any kind, and some directly discussed the pragmatism of not being confined by any identity since it facilitated their ability to adapt to any environment they encountered. Migration and acculturation experiences during childhood may foster specific reactions that are manifested in low level ethnic or national identifications. When we made comparisons by the nature of their overall acculturation and integration experiences in their first U.S. schools and neighborhoods associated with

emotions we did not find significant variation between the cases in their identity constructions. This pattern stands in contrast to the phenomenon of reactive ethnicity found among the second generation youth who embraced national identities when confronted with prejudice and discrimination. In part this is because the other factors as well as the present context weigh as heavily in the Russian and Ukrainian constructions of identity as their past migrants memories.

### **Adaptation on the Urban University Campus**

Through the interviews with the Eastern European immigrant students we found that their narratives reflected considerable variation in terms of young adult adaptation, socialization and social integration patterns. Overall, as a group, the participants had adapted well to the academic and social life within the campus community. They reported that their academic progress was good and were enthused over their individual life goals, and most had become integrated into the various social and/or professional groups on campus. In their interviews they consistently expressed valuing the social experiences on the multicultural campus, and that they appreciated the ethnic and racial diversity among the student body. Despite these commonalities, a striking difference was found in the narratives of a third of the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students who had reported ongoing social, cultural, and linguistic challenges on campus. Moreover, those who reported such struggles were disproportionately those whose early migratory experiences were remembered as the most difficult; whereas three quarters of those students with reported college challenges were “traumatic” transitioners. (Chapter 7). The elucidate the direction of causality, but it facilitates comparisons of emergent themes within the

narratives that the participants constructed about the meanings of life events. These findings lend support to the idea that difficult childhood migration, acculturation, and integration experiences and their persistent undertow of emotions continue to exert an influence on the participants in young adulthood.

There were also interesting patterns discussed in the narratives about their friendship groups on campus. Among the constellation of their collective 98 friends, 54 were first-generation immigrant students and 44 were American-born students. Comparisons by race indicated that the participants, with few exceptions, and that while there also was a large proportion of white students among their immigrant friends (59.3%) they also had many ethnically and racially diverse immigrant friends (40.7%). Although students more commonly mentioned shared interests as the basis for forming friendships rather than shared ethnicity, a few did express that during the transition to college life co-ethnic friends could provide support in the best way possible. "However, it was interesting that among the Russian or Ukrainians immigrants) who were included among their close friendship groups, and that only one friend of a total of 98 collected student of Russian or Ukrainian ancestry.

It was particularly interesting to compare the social interaction patterns of the Eastern European Immigrant students who participated in this study with the social mixing patterns found among four non-white second-generation immigrant groups on the same urban campus studied by Grasmuck and Kim (2010). In their investigation the prevalent socialization patterns that emerged within the students' narratives

simultaneously, fragmented upper middle class (predominantly white) and “minority mixers” (mostly white and “minority mixers”). When groups socially mixed with co-ethnics, a third of the students in each group were engaged in salient cross-racial socialization on campus. The Hispanic students, in contrast with a smaller representation on the campus, were different; approximately half of them mixed most often with African Americans (“minority mixers”) and other groups. In contrast to the observed patterns among most of the non-white immigrant students, we found a low level of fragmented pluralism since their ethnicity. However, if few “in the notion”, of “in ethnic and other immigrants, we may be able to conclude that the dominant socialization pattern group” (58.8%), a socialization pattern not a culturalism representative of fragmented pluralism and interactive pluralism to a lesser extent with American-born students (4.8%). “Consequently, Eastern European child migrants interacted with most often were other immigrants of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds (including co-ethnics) but they also socialized to a considerable degree (about 40%) mostly with white Americans.

When we look beyond immigrant status to a focus exclusively on race within their friendship networks, we find very little mixing with any native racial minorities among this group of Eastern European students, a notable bright boundary. To the extent that they have blurred boundaries with non-white students, they are with non-white immigrant students not non-white American-born students. This is in sharp contrast to the pattern noted by Grasmuck and Kim (2010) with Hispanics who when they did not mix mostly with white students tended to mix

most with African American students. In addition, we find bright boundaries between the Russian and Ukrainian participants and other co-ethnic students and nearly absent interactions between them and second-generation students of their own ethnic groups. A third of the students reported discomfort or difficulty connecting with co-ethnics. The ongoing immigration from Eastern Europe, regional differences, degree of nationalism in the sending country, and varying stages of assimilation within the U.S. are some of the potential determinants in relationships among co-ethnics. And the lack of commonality between the Russian and Ukrainian students who participated in this study with the second generation as expressed in their narratives may have influenced social interaction within the groups. Overall, there may be other factors that influence the variation in social interaction patterns found between these groups that could include in-group dynamics associated with the first country and/or the U.S., commonality of shared immigrant experience, and the marginalization of immigrants by mainstream Americans in the U.S. society. The dominant pattern of immigrant social mixing patterns is one measure of their self-perception as “immigrant” and however, other variables may influence the Eastern European socialization patterns such as the potential connection with their salient non ethnic self-identifications and the possible orientation toward a shared sense of cosmopolitanism with other immigrant students. Taken together it may also reflect a reaction to the marginalization of immigrants in the U.S. society. When we applied the constructed migration typology in our comparisons we find that it cannot explain the variation in social interaction patterns that emerged with traumatic early migratory, acculturation, and integration experience did not seem to predispose one to a particular social mixing style, either pro-migrant or hostile to migrants.

Another key finding in this study is the prevalent embrace of the ideologies of “meritocracy” and “color blind” society. Most of the students expressed that all of the students on the university campus had an equal opportunity for upward mobility. On the dimension of advantage and disadvantage among the students, there were differences in viewpoints found when taking into account the overall nature of their acculturation and integration experiences in childhood. The students whose narratives reported traumatic transitions most often expressed that disadvantage did not exist on the campus, and that there was an equal playing field. In contrast, the students who had reported less challenges during the period of childhood migration transitions observed disadvantaged students within the collegiate body of students. Similar differences in standpoints by the nature of their integration were discerned on the topic of privilege and power, with some students expressing that white people are not more privileged. Some of the students in this group provided examples of personal experiences of how they as white immigrants have had less privileges and power. These striking differences in standpoints on important issues demonstrate that recollections of childhood acculturation experiences and connected emotions influence attitudes in young adulthood.

Regardless of the nature of their acculturation and incorporation, as a group the participants predominantly disassociated with the American history of prejudice and discrimination essentially since as immigrants they were not connected to those events. Moreover, they strongly objected to any form of white accountability or any other collective accountability based on racial group membership for historical injustices. To bolster their standpoint on this topic they described their own immigrant struggle and/or provided

descriptions of “white on white” oppression in regions of the world, the discrimination and prejudice they had experienced first hand when they first arrived, and equated it with the “white” of the participants maintained that lessons should be learned from those negative experiences but they should remain in the past. Nonetheless, there were also Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students that held American citizens should assume responsibility for potential effects of past injustices, and that as American citizens they want to make a contribution.

This investigation on the adaptation pathways of Eastern European participants on the urban university campus indicates that although they emigrated to the U.S. during childhood their persisting identification with other immigrants of similar and different backgrounds is salient and influences the socialization styles of about half of the group. At the same time a sizable proportion appear to be incorporating into elements of campus culture most linked to mainstream white America. Comparisons on several dimensions of adaptation indicate that the emotional acculturation associated with childhood narratives was salient and appeared to be one of the influences on other dimensions. The narratives of the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students are valuable in contributing to the limited knowledge on the experiences of child migrants in general and in particular those that have emigrated from the former Soviet Republics and the growing proportion of white immigrants among the newer waves of post-1965 immigration.

### **Implications for Theory, Future Research, and Caveats**

The findings from this study indicate that further research is required on the impact of emotions that immigrant children may experience during the disruption of their primary

socialization stage and the transition in a new culture and language. Since children select elements from the psychological or emotional realm in their self-concept construction (Rosenberg, 1992) the immigrant children who have had endured painful cultural and linguistic experiences where they were isolated and rejected could conceivably add negative elements to their evolving self. We turn now to a brief reflection on how these findings relate to one widely discussed theory of immigrant incorporation, namely segmented assimilation. The strength of the segmented assimilation theory is that it does not posit merely one trajectory through which immigrants find their way but ideally at least three dominant ways, upward mobility by assimilating directly into mainstream middle class American culture, upward mobility by selective assimilation and holding onto strategic elements of immigrant culture often in close proximity to ethnic enclaves and downward mobility into the marginalized sectors of American society. The model places a great significance on the pace of acculturation of parents and children designated as consonant, selective and dissonant acculturation. The central component of each adaptation pathway is the degree of a and language in relationship to their children when considering factors that include family history, resources, and context of reception during incorporation. The acculturation pathway is considered consonant when both parents and children abandon their language and culture of origin at the same time, and the parents have sufficient human capital to monitor the cultural evolution of the children. Selective acculturation that occurs within a large co-ethnic community was found to be the preferred pathway; it partially retains the parent norms. Negative outcomes for the second generation were associated with dissonant acculturation that is reflective of downward mobility. When the second generation youth were

on this trajectory they acculturated at a faster pace compared to their parents that caused generational conflict, undermined parental authority and perpetuated risk for downward mobility.

Segmented assimilation theory has been dubbed “immigrants and their children” and it is critiqued (Greenman, 2005:5). Though the model seems implicitly to recognize an emotional sphere of adjustment especially in the discussion of the important role played by parents in offering affirming models of home culture that can counteract discrimination and cultural rejection in the broader society and local spaces, how this happens is not theorized. Moreover, the emotional needs of children seem to begin at later stages of life rather than the emotional fallout that might begin with the migration process. The model does not fully address the influence of emotions during the process of assimilation for the foreign-born children, disruption of the various childhood developmental stages, and the related context of peer reception that is apart from the adult experience. This finding from this study indicates that while the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students are following a trajectory that is reflective of upward mobility their experience as foreign-born immigrant children cannot be readily explained by the three paths formulated by Portes and Rumbaut of “second generation and dissonant acculturation (2001:54). The theory precludes the assessment of immigrant children’s transitional experiences that are designed to explain second generation outcomes, not younger child migrants. It will be recalled that in our study 33 of the 34 child migrants from Eastern Europe who participated in this study expressed that their immigration and transitional experiences have deeply influenced the persons that they have become. Second generation children born in America to at least one immigrant

parent do not share the uprooting, emigration and transitions in the U.S. context with child migrants. Furthermore, as stated previously, although there is a prevalent assumption that the

salient influence on the cultural and linguistic patterns of Ukrainian child migrants in this study most often expressed that there were striking distinctions between them and their native-born American siblings.

Although all of the differences, similarities and interconnections experienced by immigrant families generally and those reported by the participants specifically cannot be fully addressed here, we will discuss certain distinctions and associated emotions. Whereas in the segmented assimilation theory assessments of outcomes are contingent on the context in which immigrant parents and their children are received, immigrant children contend with more than one context of reception during their incorporation. Contexts of reception that were created by peers in their first neighborhoods and schools are worlds that the immigrant parents typically do not enter nor negotiate. Although research has focused on how immigrant parents strive to offset downward mobility of their children because of negative peer influences, the emotional impact of rejection and isolation by peers during childhood acculturation and integration has not been adequately considered. Two thirds of the Russian and Ukrainian students had reported having had either difficult or traumatic transitions due to lack of acceptance, isolation and prejudicial acts against them by their peers in their neighborhoods and/or schools during their acculturation and integration. Within those contexts they most often had to cope alone since their parents did not know the language or understand the structures. There are particular connotations for immigrant children when they enter schools where a peer social hierarchy exists and where students compete for status

positions which can lead to aggressive behavior (Faris and Felmlee, 2011). When immigrant children arrive they typically do not understand the American culture, English language, formal and informal systems, and are, therefore, vulnerable within these contested peer spaces. They are likely to have low levels of power and may be placed in the lowest rungs of the peer social stratification system. While mobility outcomes are the focus of the varied acculturation pathways in segmented assimilation, the specific emotional acculturation and its potential variants has not been considered. This investigation indicates that a theoretical framework specific to the disruption of vulnerable childhood developmental stages, ensuing acculturation within peer contexts of reception, engendered emotions specific to children, and potential outcomes for social psychological adjustment, adaptation and mobility is warranted. The characteristics for the stage of acculturation may be distinctive for children when compared to adults as well as their adaptation.

Previously we discussed the impact on children during major upheavals in their lives that include the divorce of their parents. The potential lasting consequences of the emotional trauma associated with acculturation and integration childhood experiences emerged when employing the constructed migration transition typology on the dimension of adaptation on the university campus. Because of the small sample of participants in this exploration it is not possible to provide a definitive explanation for these emergent patterns in their narratives discussed herein. However, children might be particularly vulnerable when they abruptly shift from a cultural and linguistic context where they have gained a sense of competence to one that is obscure, unwelcoming and undermines their confidence. Research on the reaction by children to the crisis of immigration indicated that those between ages six and eleven were particularly

vulnerable (Inbar and Adler, 1977). Additionally, since the participants emigrated when they were of “school age” they experienced the difficulties identified as the “most decisive stage” (Erickson, 1996), (Erickson, 1996), depression, homesickness for the first country, disassociation from others, and sense of not belonging anywhere were some of the reactions reported by the participants.

Importantly, most of the participants narrative linguistic challenges on campus were represented most often by those who had included in their narratives that they had experienced emotional trauma during their incorporation. When they recounted their recollections of these painful events during the interviews their discussions were often accompanied with emotions that included sadness, anger, and melancholy. On these dimensions and others it appears that the magnitude and nature of the emotions that the participants have experienced could have conditioned their standpoints, attitudes, and integration patterns on the university campus. Human emotions have been found to be a powerful force that give meanings to cultural symbols and that “integrate patterns of behavior” (Erickson, 1996:292). Yet, assimilation theory does not take into account the influence of emotions experienced by immigrant youth when assessing the nature of and/or reasons for the different incorporation modes identified among this population. It is, like much of the immigration literature that stresses economic and educational outcomes, affect flat. Nor does the theory accommodate the impact of disrupted childhood developmental stages during their primary socialization in one cultural and linguistic context and the potential impact of child development in a new cultural context. However, our analysis of the observed patterns related to the degree of emotion

experienced by the participants within their peer contexts of reception during their transitions in the U.S. schools and neighborhoods is limited. There are many variables identified in this study that also need to be considered in any investigation of outcomes for immigrant children. Within the narratives of the Eastern European students there were patterns of protective and risk factors that have been identified on outcomes for immigrant children as well as elements not typically taken into account. The degree of advance preparation for emigration, family stability, support systems of extended kin, attitude of neighbors, support in school, and integration with American peers and co-ethnics could determine the nature of their transitions in the first neighborhood and school. It is also possible that the effects of childhood migration transitions may be latent for some immigrant children, and may not be manifested until they enter a different context such as family formation, post-college. In a few instances, the child migrants in this exploration had reported good high school experiences after their difficult transition, but then reported challenges on campus related to their childhood emigration and transition even though they were upwardly mobile college students. At different times in the interviews the participants discussed how other Eastern European child migrants they had known were not able to overcome the migration stresses, and how these young people had connected with the “wrong friends” and experienced loneliness during the period of acculturation. The outcomes for these child migrants included downward mobility and detrimental activities that in some cases ended tragically. A closer examination is required of the child migrants at the time of their arrival when they are most vulnerable, and of their emotional reactions to the nature of their socialization or lack of it.

To summarize, as a group the Eastern European students expressed that the immigration and transitional experiences, perspectives gained from the shared struggle with their parents, openness to diversity, achievement orientation, and work ethic are some of the differentiating characteristics that set them apart from their native-born American siblings and other second-generation Russian and Ukrainian children of immigrants. Despite the fact that they emigrated at young ages their immigrant status remained salient in their psyches. Most often the Russian and Ukrainian immigrant students socialized with other immigrants of diverse backgrounds, mainstream American students, and least often with co-ethnics and rarely with second-generation co-ethnics or native minorities. When we conceptualize the social interaction boundary to

include all immigrants, then the participants

groupers" following in a modified form some of the students that had recounted traumatic events connected with childhood acculturation within their narratives predominantly reported social, cultural and linguistic challenges on campus. Self-identifications reflected salient non-ethnic identity components. The participants who

constructed narratives of traumatic migration transitions relatively more often expressed that whites do not have more privileges; they held that equality of opportunity exists for all groups on the multicultural campus and espoused the ideology of meritocracy. When all of the dominant

patterns discussed herein are taken together,

childhood migration transitions may continue to resonate during young adulthood. In essence their emotional acculturation may continue to resonate in significant ways. The students

reaction to these profound experiences of isolation and rejection by mainstream American peers and ethnic peers who emigrated before them during critical childhood development stages could

be manifested in coping mechanisms that connect them socially to other students that share their migration experiences, work ethic, and values.

Overall, the narratives of the Eastern European immigrant students support the standpoint that research focused on investigations about childhood emigration experiences and outcomes is best served by categorizing this population based on their age at the time of arrival and developmental stages. Rumbaut (2007) disaggregated the foreign-born from the native-born population and found striking differences in a variety of outcomes that include mobility, language acquisition, and acculturation. Creating gross generational categories or arbitrary cut off points for immigrant status based on unwa retention of first culture and language can undermine the integrity of the outcomes. Although it is recognized that there are variations, broadly these two distinct groups have typically in common at least one immigrant parent, influence of a first culture and language in the home, shared race and/or ethnicity that may or may not be asserted and ascribed, impacted by socio-economic factors related to the stage of the par that may be associated with the parental expectations of their children that are influenced by the culture of origin. However, the foreign-born and native-born American youth are typically distinct from each other in critical ways. As one participant in this study expressed, the native-born American children of immigrants do not have to do anything to become Americans since they already are Americans. Instead, the foreign-born children have to strive and figure out how to become Americans. There are specific differences that the participants discussed at different times in the interview that sets them apart from the second-generation children of immigrants. They include birth and socialization in different country, separation from the first home through

migration, attachments (first culture and language, family, friends, way of life), integration into a new cultural/linguistic context, negotiation of peer contexts of reception, emotional import of these changes, shared immigrant struggle with parents, and development of a dual sense of reference. Methodologies are warranted that take into account the distinctive characteristics of the foreign-born children since generational categories have served to conflate categories of immigrant children with native-born children whose parents are immigrants. Concomitantly, methodologies that consider the nature, magnitude, and influence of emotional acculturation in social psychological, adaptation, and mobility outcomes for children are particularly needed. Our investigation indicates that for the Eastern European participants the internal emotions connected with this childhood developmental stage and ensuing difficult acculturation may continue to have an effect in their emerging selves. Research initiatives that focus on the emotional acculturation of child migrants and outcomes could potentially contribute to the imbalance that exists in the immigrant youth literature which predominantly focuses on mobility and the acculturation gap between children and their parents (Telzer, 2011).

There are limitations in generalizing from the findings of this study given the sample size, and since the students self-selected to participate in the interviews we cannot generalize the findings to the larger population. Inclusion of more participants that represent each age at time of departure or childhood developmental stages would be desirable in future investigations concerning immigrant children's outcomes. A further Russian and Ukrainian students who participated were upwardly mobile college students who had overcome many of the challenges that confronted them since arrival in the U.S. when they were children. Consequently, it is important in future investigation of migration, acculturation,

integration and adaptation experiences of children from Eastern Europe to include participants who have not been able to overcome these obstacles. Additional comparisons between foreign-born child migrants and their American-born siblings in the same home would be an important consideration in future research. It is also critical to include the voices of immigrant children in any investigation of their emigration and transitional experiences regardless of what internal process they utilized to develop the narratives of those events. Since the emotional component of the Eastern European acculturation and integration experiences during childhood was salient on certain dimensions of their social adaptation in young adulthood the emotional legacy of the migration transition should be placed on at least an equal footing in future research with structural features such as governmental policies toward them, the composition of their enclaves, and labor market conditions. More immigration research that includes dimensions of emotional acculturation during the disruption of the critical school age developmental stage could potentially guide policy to assist immigrant children from all regions of the world during their integration in U.S. schools and neighborhoods particularly in their peer contexts of reception. More affirmative emotional experiences of incorporation could potentially exert a positive long-term influence on the immigrant child manifested in their young adulthood.

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**APPENDIX A**  
**INTERVIEW GUIDE**

Eastern European Immigrant Youth Identity Formation and Adaptation  
in an Urban University Context

CASE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

SEX: 1. MALE \_\_\_\_\_ 2. FEMALE \_\_\_\_\_

SOURCE OF REFERRAL: \_\_\_\_\_

**Consent Form Read and Signed?** \_\_\_\_\_ **Yes** \_\_\_\_\_ **No**  
(Verify if filled in permanent address.)

**Interview Process**

Case Number: _____		Interview	Coding of Guide	Transcription of Tape	Coding of Transcription
Time complete to					
Date completed					

Let's start with s **CHECK IF RECORDER IS ON.** tions first .

## Opening Statement

I remember my country of birth, Germany, my childhood experiences during the WWII era, and our emigration to the U.S. When my parents, brothers and I arrived there were both challenges and opportunities in our new home. I hope that you will feel alright to answer questions that I will ask since we do not regularly have conversations. Remember that I am interested in learning how people who emigrated from Eastern Europe during childhood contend with issues when they were growing up, and when I ask a specific question it is only to understand better the meanings that you have made of your experience. Each of us has a unique story to tell and I am interested in learning about yours.

1. How old are you now? \_\_\_\_\_ 2. That would make your year of birth? 19\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is your class standing at Temple?
  - Freshman \_\_\_\_\_
  - Sophomore \_\_\_\_\_
  - Junior \_\_\_\_\_
  - Senior \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many years have you been at Temple? \_\_\_\_\_ [IF LESS THAN TWO YEARS, STOP]
5. Did you come to Temple as a Freshman or did you transfer here?  
[IF TRANSFERRED] 6. How many semesters have you been at Temple?
  1. Came as freshman \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Transferred in \_\_\_\_\_ (Fall or Spring) of \_\_\_\_\_(year of transfer)
7. What is your major? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Could you tell me where you were born? \_\_\_\_\_
9. In what year did you come to the United States? \_\_\_\_\_ [ROUND TO NEAREST YEAR]
10. That would make you how old at the time of your arrival? \_\_\_\_\_ [IF YOUNGER THAN 5 OR OLDER THAN 13 YEARS, STOP.]
11. Are you a U.S. Citizen? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Could you tell me where your parents were born? \_\_\_\_\_
13. Could you tell me briefly the story of how you and your family came to the United States? Who in your family were the original immigrants? Who did you come with? [PROBE FOR THEIR VISA STATUS UPON ENTERING THE U.S.]

### **Theme 1. Memories of Country of Origin and Migration**

14. What are the most important things that you remember about your childhood experiences in your country of origin? [PROBE: FRIENDS, FAMILY, NEIGHBORS, SCHOOL, TRADITIONS, CULTURE, LANDSCAPE, GOVERNMENT, LANGUAGE, NATIONAL EVENTS.]
15. How did you learn that you would be emigrating to the U.S. and how did you feel about that? [PROBE: DECISION-MAKING PROCESS—FAMILY, PARENT(S), RESPONDENT, OTHER? WHY WAS THE DECISION MADE? NATURE OF JOURNEY AND FEELINGS THAT WERE ENGENDERED.]
16. Have you ever returned to Russia/Ukraine, and if so how often? [PROBE: IF YES, WHAT ARE THE RESPONDENT'S IMPRESSIONS; DOES THE RESPONDENT RETURN PERMANENTLY? IF THE RESPONDENT HAS NOT VISITED, DOES HE/SHE DESIRE TO DO SO? WHY OR WHY NOT?]
17. Are there any experiences related to your early years in Russia/Ukraine, and your immigration during your childhood that has affected who you are today? [PROBE: WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE GREATEST INFLUENCES?]

### **Theme 2. Transition in U.S.**

18. Could you tell me about how your family life changed when you first came to the U.S.? [PROBE: WHO WERE THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD IN THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN, AND IS THE HOUSEHOLD IN THE U.S. THE SAME OR DIFFERENT; COMPARISON OF FAMILY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN U.S. AND IN RUSSIA/UKRAINE; FEELINGS ABOUT ANY CHANGES.]
19. In comparison to your neighbors and neighborhood in Russia/Ukraine what were your impressions of your neighbors and neighborhood in the U.S. when you arrived? [PROBE: ATTITUDE OF NEIGHBORS TOWARD RESPONDENT AND FAMILY; ETHNIC AND RACIAL COMPOSITION OF NEIGHBORHOOD.]
20. What do you remember about your first school experiences in the U.S.? [PROBE: SUPPORTS, CHALLENGES, TEACHERS AND STUDENTS ATTITUDES FRIENDSHIP GROUPS—ETHNIC/RACIAL COMPOSITION; ENGLISH ACQUISITION; ACADEMIC PROGRESS; BEST AND WORST RECOLLECTIONS ABOUT EARLY SCHOOL EXPERIENCE; COMPARISON OF FOREIGN-BORN AND NATIVE-BORN SIBLINGS EXPERIENCE WITH RESPONDENT'S EXPERIENCE]
21. Thinking back on your high school years, what are your most important memories? [PROBE: SUPPORTS, CHALLENGES, TEACHERS AND STUDENTS ATTITUDES]

RESPONDENT, FRIENDSHIP GROUPS—ETHNIC/RACIAL COMPOSITION; ENGLISH ACQUISITION; ACADEMIC PROGRESS; BEST AND WORST RECOLLECTIONS ABOUT THE H.S. EXPERIENCE; COMPARISON OF FOREIGN-BORN AND NATIVE-BORN SIBLINGS SCHOOL EXPERIENCE. WITH RESPONDENT S

### Theme 3. Urban University Context and Adaptation

22. When thinking about the time you have spent at Temple University, how would you describe your own experience? That is, what is the story of what has most meaningfully happened to you since coming here? [PROBE: CHALLENGES, ACADEMIC PROGRAM; SOCIALIZATION; HIGHLIGHTS; EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES; ORGANIZATIONS.]
23. Consider this conversation between two friends who are Ukrainian/Russian like you. Tell me which one best expresses your situation. [INSERT RELEVANT CONVERSATION]

[MALES] Peter says:

[FEMALES] Katherine says:

“ H a v i n g a g r o u p o f o t h e r R u s s i a n / U k r a i n i a n f  
comfort and support at Temple. I d o n t k n o w h o w I w o u l d h a v e m

AND

[MALES] Michael says:

[FEMALES] Alexandra says:

“ E v e n t h o u g h m y b a c k g r o u n d i s R u s s i a n / U k r a i n  
class with people of different backgrounds because o f o t h e r i n t e r e s t s o f m i

Tell me which one, if either, best describes your situation and how so?

1. I agree with the first speaker.
2. I agree with the second speaker.
3. I d o n t a g r e e w i t h e i t h e r s p e a k e r b e c a u s e . . .

24. N o w l e t s t a l k a b o u t h o s e t h r e e o f y o u r f r i e n d s a t T e m p l e t h a t y o u r i e n d s  
spend most of your time with?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

25. What is the ethnicity/race of these three friends?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

26. Are there any groups on campus that you feel particularly comfortable with or uncomfortable with? And if so, could you please explain. [PROBE: ANY ETHNIC, RACIAL, RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL, LINGUISTIC, BASIS FOR COMFORT OR DISCOMFORT? DOES RESPONDENT BELIEVE ANY GROUP IS MORE PRIVILEGED OR DISADVANTAGED ON CAMPUS? WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RUSSIAN AND UKRAINIAN STUDENTS? DO CURRENT POLITICAL EVENTS AND/OR PAST HISTORY IN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE HAVE AN EFFECT ON STUDENTS FROM THOSE NATIONS?]

#### Theme 4. Saliency and Maintenance of Identity

27. Now I'd like to get ~~most important things that define you as a~~ some person. If you are describing yourself in a be a few things you might tell them to give them a good sense of who you are as a person and your interests?
28. If you are asked about your identity, how do you define yourself? [PROBE FOR INFLUENCES OF IDENTITY FORMATION IN THE U.S.; IF NON-ETHNIC IDENTITY IS GIVEN, PROBE FOR WHY THIS IS IDENTITY IS SALIENT.]
29. Has the way you identify while living in the U.S. changed (or is different) from the way you identified in Russia/Ukraine? [IF RESPONDENT STRUGGLES WITH THE ANSWER, PROBE: That is, in some places what seems most important about your identity is one thing whereas in another something else matters. How does this work for you?] [PROBE: HOW DID YOUR BROTHERS, SISTERS AND PARENTS IDENTIFY WHILE IN THEIR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN?]
30. People are often asked to classify themselves in terms of ethnic or racial categories. How do you identify yourself now on campus? That is, what do you call yourself? [PROBE: HOW DO BROTHERS AND SISTERS IDENTIFY—FOREIGN BORN AND NATIVE BORN? HOW PARENTS IDENTIFY?]
31. Do you think that race is less or more important in the U.S. when compared to Russia/Ukraine, and why do you think so? [PROBE FOR FIRST IMPRESSIONS IN U.S.; NEIGHBORHOOD, HIGH SCHOOL AND TEMPLE CAMPUS.]
32. When you hear the term, *whiteness*, what does it mean to you? [CLARIFY IF REQUESTED BY RESPONDENT; PROBE: DOES THE WHITE DOMINANT A MEANING? IN RUSSIA/UKRAINE DID THE TERM, WHITENESS, HAVE A MEANING, AND IF SO WAS IT SIMILAR OR DIFFERENT? WHEN CONSIDERING THE HISTORY

OF SLAVERY, RACE, AND DISCRIMINATION IN THE U.S. WHAT IS THE VIEWPOINT REGARDING "COLLECTIVE GUILT" OR "WHITE ACCOUNTABILITY"?

33. Has the way you identify, or the importance you place on it, changed over time? [PROBE: SELF-IDENTIFICATION BEFORE HIGH SCHOOL, DURING HIGH SCHOOL, AND COLLEGE; DO BROTHERS AND SISTERS HAVE A SIMILAR OR DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE IN SELF-IDENTIFICATION COMPARED TO THE RESPONDENTS?]

### Summary Question

34. Based on your experience, what do you think are the greatest challenges for immigrant children the U.S., and what advice would you give to those who are assisting immigrant children during their transitions?
35. Are there any other issues or personal experiences you can tell me about that would shed more light on the kinds of things we have been discussing? In other words, what should I have asked and didn't?

### Demographic Section

I would like to finish by asking you a few background questions. It should only take about three minutes more.

36. Which of following best describes the household you grew up in high school? [READ WHOLE LIST, THEN CHECK CATEGORY THAT APPLIES]

1. Live with my (biological or adoptive) father and mother
2. Live with my father and stepmother (or other female adult)
3. Live with my mother and stepfather (or other male adult)
4. Live with my father alone
5. Live with my mother alone
6. Alternative living with my father and mother who are divorced or separated
7. Live with other adult guardians.
8. Other: please explain \_\_\_\_\_

37. Which of the following people, *in addition to your parents or guardians, lived with you*, that is, in the house where you spent most of the time during your lifetime (check all that apply).

1. Brothers or step-brothers \_\_\_\_\_ How many? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Sisters or step-sisters \_\_\_\_\_ How many? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Grandfather or grandmother
4. Uncles or aunts

5 Other relatives

6 Non-relatives

38. In total, how many older brothers and sisters (or steps) do you have? \_\_\_\_ [GIVES ORDER]

39. Please describe the present or most recent job of your **father**, stepfather, or male guardian:

40. Is he **currently working**, unemployed, retired, or disabled?

1. Currently working \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Unemployed \_\_\_\_\_  
3. Retired \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Disabled \_\_\_\_\_

[IF THE FATHER IS UNEMPLOYED, RETIRED, OR DISABLED, ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS FOR HIS MOST RECENT JOB.] 41. What **kind of work** does he normally do? That is, what is his **job** called?

Name of occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

42. [IF UNCLEAR] What does he actually **do in that job**? What are some of his main duties?

43. Describe the **place** where he works; what does the company make or do? (*INDUSTRY*)

44. What is the highest level of **education** that he completed?

1. Elementary school or less \_\_\_\_\_  
2. Middle school graduate or less \_\_\_\_\_  
3. Some high school \_\_\_\_\_  
4. High school graduate \_\_\_\_\_  
5. Some college or university \_\_\_\_\_  
6. College graduate or more \_\_\_\_\_  
7. Other \_\_\_\_\_ Explain \_\_\_\_\_

45. Please describe the present or most recent **job** of your **mother**, stepmother or female guardian. But first, is she **currently working**, unemployed, retired, or disabled?

1. Currently working \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Unemployed \_\_\_\_\_  
3. Retired \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Disabled \_\_\_\_\_

[IF THE MOTHER IS UNEMPLOYED, RETIRED, OR DISABLED, ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS FOR HER MOST RECENT JOB...]

46. What kind of work does she normally do? That is, what is her **job** called?

Name of **occupation**: \_\_\_\_\_

47. [IF UNCLEAR] What does she actually do in that job? What are some of her main duties?

48. Describe the **place** where she works; what does the company make or do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

49. What is the highest level of **education** that she completed?

1. Elementary school or less \_\_\_\_\_
2. Middle school graduate or less \_\_\_\_\_
3. Some high school \_\_\_\_\_
4. High school graduate \_\_\_\_\_
5. Some college or university \_\_\_\_\_
6. College graduate or more \_\_\_\_\_
7. Other \_\_\_\_\_ Explain \_\_\_\_\_

50. Did your parents do the same or different work when they lived in Russia/Ukraine? [IF DIFFERENT, ASK THE RESPONDENT TO DESCRIBE THE NATURE OF THEIR EMPLOYMENT IN THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN.]

Considering **income** from **all** sources including jobs, investments, public assistance, unemployment insurance, social security, disability and pension funds, and all other sources, what was your **total household** income during the last 12 months? [SHOW CARD AFTER FIRST CHOICE.]

51. Was it less than \$40,000, \$40,001 - \$80,000, or more than \$80,000?

- a. LESS THAN \$40,000 [SKIP to Q 52.1]
- b. \$40,001 - \$80,000 [SKIP TO Q,52,2]
- c. MORE THAN \$80,000 [SKIP TO Q 52.3]
- 8 D O N T K N O W [SKIP TO Q 52]
- 7 REFUSED [SKIP TO Q.52]

52. Was that?

- | 1. <u>Less than \$40,000</u> | 2. <u>\$40-80,000</u>  | 3. <u>More than \$80,000</u> |
|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. Less than \$10,000,       | a. \$40,001-\$50,000   | a. \$80,000-\$90,000         |
| b. \$10,001 - \$20,000       | b. \$50,001-\$60,000   | b. \$90,001-\$100,000        |
| c. \$20,001 - \$30,000,      | c. \$60,001-\$70,000   | c. \$100,001 - \$110,000     |
| d. \$30,001 - \$40,000?      | d. \$70,001 - \$80,000 | d. \$110,001 - \$120,000,    |
| 8 D O N T K N O W            | 8 D O N T K N O W      | 8 D O N K N O W              |
| 7 REFUSED                    | 7 REFUSED              | 7 REFUSED                    |

53. Comparing your family's income with the income you think that your family's is (household of origin)

54. In what religion, if any, were you raised? \_\_\_\_\_. [PROBE IF NECESSARY]: Was it Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, some other religion or no religion at all? [IF MORE THAN ONE ANSWER, ASK FOR THE RELIGION THAT THEY FELT CLOSEST TO AT AGE 13.]

55. Is your current religious preference the same, that is \_\_\_\_\_ [RELIGION] or different?

56. [ I F D F] ~~Where is your~~ current religious preference?

57. How often do you attend religious services ? \_\_\_\_\_

58. Do you work? \_\_\_\_\_ No  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Only in the summers  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Part-time/irregular \_\_\_\_\_ Hours per week during semester  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Full time (40+ hours)

59. What are the sources of your income for your personal expenses?

60. GPA thus far at [name of university] \_\_\_\_\_

61. GPA at high school \_\_\_\_\_

**CONTACTS:** Before I forget, I have one more thing, a favor, to ask of you. We need a range of students coming from different contacts, not all from the same person. I am wondering if you may know of other Russian/Ukrainian students who might be willing to be interviewed. And if so, could you recommend me to other Russian/Ukrainian friends who would fit in the criteria we are looking for. I could give you several of my **business cards** with my email and phone number and they could call me directly, telling me who sent them. It would be great if you could recommend to me one male and one female.

We are finally finished. **Thank you so much** for your time and serious attention here.

**APPENDIX B**

## RECRUITMENT LETTER FOR INTERVIEWEES

Date:

Dear [Student],

I am writing to ask for your possible participation in a Temple University supported project. It concentrates on how university and college students who immigrated to the United States during childhood from Russia and the Ukraine adjust to the demands of social life on university campuses. We are hoping to interview [name of university] students who arrived in the United States between the age of five and thirteen. (This would exclude international students whose families live abroad). We seek to understand how students who were child migrants (school age) from Eastern Europe during the post-communist era (i.e., since 1991) adapt to the social life in an urban university and how they develop their self-identification.

The data you provide would be recorded anonymously and your participation and anything you say would be held in the strictest confidence. When we publish results from this research you or the information you provide would not be identified by name. I will be able to compensate you with \$20 for the interview. The students I have talked with so far have found it very interesting to tell their story. There are not right or wrong answers here; we are just interested in your opinions. Your responses will be completely confidential and we will not use your name in any report or publication based on this research.

Would you let us know if you would be available and willing to be interviewed for about 60 to 90 minutes? The interview would be conducted on the [name of university] campus in a private room, [interview location]. You can either reply to me directly by email or if you would like to discuss this further before you decide, please call me at 856.629-6040. I hope you decide to join me for a conversation about your experiences and adjustments to college life. Since I hope to conclude the interviews relatively soon, letting me know as soon as possible would be especially helpful.

Thanking you in advance,

Brunhild Seeger-diNovi  
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Temple University  
Telephone: 856-629-6040  
Email: brunhild@temple.edu

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